

Identity Negotiation:

Rethinking the Affects of International Study in a Global Society

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Abstract

Technological advancements have brought people from distant lands closer together, summoning cultural and linguistics unification. The process of social integration involves cultural confrontation and identity negotiation in order to achieve cultural reorientation and eventually acclimation. Thus modern human identities are continually in flux, as they are constantly adapting to their changing surroundings. This process can cause internal chaos and self estrangement particularly for foreign nationals living abroad, as they have not had a lifetime of experience in which to understand cultural tendencies of their host country.

International study is perhaps one of the most prolific forms of human diaspora, making international students a prime case study in which to view the effects of internationalization as it affects individual identity. The researcher approached the research opportunity by focusing on primarily ERASMUS students that studied abroad in 2005. In all, ninety-two comprehensive surveys, that incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data, were analyzed in order to establish if studying abroad initiates active identity negotiation and transformation.

Several main variables became the focal point because they were believed to be influential in the identity construction of the students. Variables such as the students' family background, the strength of their connection to homeland, and their emerging connection to their host country were investigated. Additionally culture clashes that the students reported during their time abroad were also analyzed. Other measured were collected which would suggest the degree of integration into their host country the students were privy to, which was then cross-compared with other variables related to identity.

The outcomes generated from this research indicate that background experiences were moderately influential in the students' acclimation ability, but specifically where the students studied, and how their international program was facilitated, were significant factors. Students that were able to effectively integrate appeared to learn more about their host country, and suggested the experience was more meaningful. The impact of the study on policy related to international education, suggests that more focus should be directed towards ensuring the students have sufficient opportunity to interact with the local population.

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Forward

In the winter of 2003, a full four years after I had completed my Bachelors degree in Business, I began get the urge to go back to school. As I had been out of college for a few years, I thought I ought to take a class or two first, as a way to ease myself back into a study routine. I came across a summer program in Oslo, which seemed a perfect first step, so I applied, and was pleased to be accepted. During the summer of 2003, I came to Oslo with few expectations, I figured it would be a fun experience, and it would help me to focus on school again. What I discovered was that the person that left for Norway that fateful summer, never returned, rather a girl that resembled her had taken her place, one, whom had whole new outlook on life. The person I would become had its origins in that summer abroad. Upon my return to Los Angeles, I discovered that I had developed new interests, preferences, different career goals, and most of all an altered sense of self. I felt as though that summer in Oslo engaged and invigorated elements of my identity that had been suppressed by my home environment. The experience allowed me to confront aspects of my identity, which laid dormant, just waiting for the proper catalyst. The experience was so profound, and powerful that I decided to do my Masters in Norway, a prospect that my former-self would have never even considered or thought possible. After a year in Oslo, it came time to decide on a thesis topic. The study of international students seemed a natural choice and one where I thought I had unique access, understanding, and experience. Thus began a year of dedication to a project that allowed me an opportunity to explore a subject that I had a genuine connection to, one, which would turn out to be as challenging as it was rewarding.

As an American of Norwegian decent, living in Norway presented no significant cultural calamities, as I already knew a good deal about Norwegian culture through my family connections, yet each day I continue to obtain new knowledge, which enhances my daily life here in Norway. As I met other international students through my research, I discovered some had no background knowledge about the countries they studied in. As I became aware of their struggles to acclimate to unfamiliar customs, my respect for their bravery grew exponentially, because I realized that their learning curve must have been much steeper than mine had been. It was these students' spirit, which beseeched me to tell their stories, for they are as compelling as they are symbolic of the effects of globalisation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	II
FORWARD.....	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	IV
LIST OF FIGURES.....	VII
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH: A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION	2
1.3 RESEARCH RATIONAL, FOCUS AND GOALS.....	4
1.4 THESIS ORGANIZATION.....	5
2. BACKGROUND, LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS	7
2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.2 THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL CULTURAL ECUMENE: THE FALLACY OF PLURALITY	8
2.2.1 <i>One_Size _Fits _All: The Internationalization and Massification of Culture:</i>	10
2.2.2 <i>Cultural Imperialism: the Rise of the West, the Demise of the Rest</i>	11
2.2.3 <i>Cultural Mediation and Interpretation</i>	12
2.2.4 <i>Globalization and International Study</i>	14
2.2.5 <i>Multiculturalism: The Visible Invisibility of Minority Culture</i>	15
2.3 NATIONALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM, MEMORY AND IMAGINING	16
2.4 RELIGION IN AN INCREASINGLY SECULAR WORLD	19
2.5 DIASPORA DOWN-UNDER	22
2.6 GONE A' VIKING: NORWEGIAN STUDENTS ABROAD	25
2.7 EVALUATING OF THE ERASMUS EXPERIENCE	28
2.8 LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMATION	31
2.9 CULTURE: A BRIEF ENCYCLOPEDIC ANTHOLOGY.....	33
2.9.1 <i>Identity as Dictated by the Dominant Culture</i>	34
2.9.2 <i>Identity as Actively Constructed</i>	35
2.10 THEORETICAL DISCUSSION SUMMATION	38
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN	41

3.1 INTRODUCTION	41
3.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS	42
3.2 1 <i>Quantitative Methodology</i>	43
3.2 2 <i>Reliability and Validity of Instrument and Outcomes</i>	44
3.2 3 <i>Qualitative Methodology</i>	45
3.2 THE RESEARCH SETTING	47
3.3 SAMPLING STRATEGIES.....	48
3.3 1 <i>Sample Organization and Size</i>	50
3.3 2 <i>Sample Details</i>	51
3.4 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN	54
3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES.....	57
3.6 DATA RECORDING AND ANALYSIS.....	58
3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	60
3.8 LIMITATIONS.....	61
4. FINDINGS	63
4.1 INTRODUCTION	63
4.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	64
4.2 1 <i>Family Background and Culture</i>	65
4.2 2 <i>Contrasting Home and Host</i>	73
4.2 3 <i>The Role of the International Exchange Programs</i>	77
4.3 CONCLUSION: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	81
4.4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS.....	84
4.4 1 <i>Culture Clashes</i>	85
4.4 2 <i>Perceptions of Norwegian Culture from Abroad</i>	85
4.4 3 <i>Contrasting Cultures from the Norwegian perspective</i>	89
4.4 4 <i>The Nation and the World: How International Students' Define 'Home'</i>	94
4.4 5 <i>The Nation and the World: How Norwegian Students' Define 'Home'</i>	97
4.5 THE TOTAL SAMPLE: A COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION OF THE OUTCOMES.....	98
4.6 CONCLUSION: PORTRAIT OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT	100
4.6 1 <i>International Students Background</i>	100
4.6 2 <i>The Effects of Studying Abroad</i>	102
4.6 3 <i>The Responsibility of the International Program Facilitators</i>	103
5. FINAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	105
5.1 INTRODUCTION	105
5.2 DISCOVERIES	106
5.3 THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION	107
5.4 A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE FINDINGS	108
5.5 IDEAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	109

REFERENCES..... 112

APPENDICES 117

<u>Appendix 1: Parents' Education.....</u>	117
<u>Appendix 2: The International Experience of the Sample's Families.....</u>	117
<u>Appendix 3: Countries of Origin Compared with Participants' Families International Experience</u>	117
<u>Appendix 4: Future Study Abroad Plans</u>	118
<u>Appendix 5: Expectation about Courtesy Total Sample</u>	118
<u>Appendix 6: Contrasting Expectations of Courtesy.....</u>	118
<u>Appendix 7: Expectation of the Degree of Courtesy From Locals.....</u>	118
<u>Appendix 8: Positive Correlation between Aspects of Life.....</u>	119
<u>Appendix 9: Positive Correlation Between Values</u>	119
<u>Appendix 10: Negative Correlation between Education Outcomes</u>	119
<u>Appendix 11: The Value of 'Health' Distributed by Area of Study.....</u>	120
<u>Appendix 12: International Student Values Matrix (shown as real numbers).....</u>	120
<u>Appendix 13: Feelings about National Expression through Song</u>	121
<u>Appendix 14: Display of National Symbols</u>	121
<u>Appendix 15: Degree of Trust in Home Government.....</u>	121
<u>Appendix 16: Perceptions of Home Government Compared to Host Government.....</u>	122
<u>Appendix 17: Socialization Activity Abroad Cross Tabulation</u>	122
<u>Appendix 18: Changes in Opinion about the Local Population</u>	122
<u>Appendix 19: Changes in Opinion about other International Students</u>	123
<u>Appendix 20: International Students' Culture Clash Typology.....</u>	123
<u>Appendix 21: Norwegian Students' Culture Clash Typology</u>	124
<u>Appendix 22: International Students' Connection to Home</u>	125
<u>Appendix 23: Norwegian Students' Connection to Home.....</u>	126
<u>Appendix 24: Code of Conduct.....</u>	127
<u>Appendix 25: Letter of Permission</u>	128
<u>Appendix 26: Definition of Terms Provided to Participants.....</u>	130
<u>Appendix 27: Information and Survey Direction.....</u>	132
<u>Appendix 28: Example of the Instrument.....</u>	133

LIST OF FIGURES

Table A: The Process of Understanding Foreign Concepts and Cultures.....	12
Table B: Review of Theorist and Theories	39
Table C: Female to Male Ratio of Sample	52
Table D: Age Distribution of Sample	52
Table E: Subject Distribution of Sample.....	54
Table F: Family Members Abroad	66
Table G: Samples' Previous International Experience	68
Table H: Socio-Cultural Make-Up and Hometown Type	70
Table I: Positive Effects of Study Abroad	99
Table J: Negative Effects of Studying Abroad.....	99

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

As global interconnectivity continues to expand, the demand for internationally marketable skills have become a pre-requisite in the age of globalization. The network society increasingly requires cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity in order to successfully penetrate new markets and merge economic interests. As a result of this phenomenon, an increasing number of students now have the opportunity to study abroad. International experience has become an attractive education additive in which to enhance students' resumes post-graduation. The experience also provides them with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity predicated on the promise of adventure, travel, international networking, all while earning academic credit, which can be applied toward a degree at their home university. A trend noted in a UNESCO survey shows a steady increase in the volume of international students worldwide, as well as a wider dispersion of countries involved in international student exchanges (UNESCO, 2003).

This thesis hopes to provide information about a vibrant sub-culture, which until recently encompassed only a small fraction of the student body. Today international students are spawning with increased velocity on university campuses worldwide. The macro effects of this trend in education have been emphasised in economic terms, but social effects on the individual identity and the changing social structure at a micro level, has received less attention. As a member of this internationally mobile community, the researcher's connection to this subject makes it especially relevant to her life, hence prompting her to peruse this topic.

Europe has emerged as a major player in international exchanges, in terms of both inbound and outbound exchanges. Much of the rationale behind this expansion of international programs in Europe is in response to legislation such as The Bologna Treaty, which has as its main tenant, making student mobility a priority as part of European unification (van der Wende, 2003). The expansion of unilateral education mobility throughout Europe may have

profound implications on the domestic education experience as well. If this surge of international exchanges continues, it will become increasingly important to learn more about this unique faction of the student population and the impact of their presence both at home and abroad.

1.2 Previous Research: A Critical Introduction

Prior research about international study has approached the topic by making the experience valuated based on single-dimensional signifiers such as ‘students’ ability to excel academically’ (Maiworm, Stuebe, and Teichler, 1991) or rationales as to ‘why students desire to study abroad’ (Wiers-Jenssen, 1993). With the exception of Dolby (2004), few researchers, outside the psychological disciplines, have attempted to gather explanatory information about what the effects are on the students emotionally. In the likeness of Dolby’s study, the researcher wished to understand the reformative effects international study has on the identity of those that participate. Dolby focused on precisely on this topic, however, the sample she procured was so selective and the scope was so narrow, that the outcomes are not transferable beyond its immediate segment of the population tested.

Studies involving international students have predominately concentrated on evaluations of specific programs. The type of analysis used in evaluation style research lacks is a relevant discussion about why the experience is valuable on a symbolic level (Weirs-Jenssen 1993; Maiworm et al. 1991). An undertaking of this magnitude requires sorting through the milieus of established theories in order to determine the preferred lens in which to assign meaning to the data. Student mobility studies that are devoid this feature, lack utility other than to report what has occurred. Generally evaluations are predicated on the need to decide whether a program should be extended, ended, or restructured. Statistics are helpful in understanding the facts, but not malleable enough to gain any clear understanding about why a practice is of value.

Student mobility has generally been explored at the macro level in previous studies, which looked at how social cohesion within society can be improved through international study

(Maiworm et al. 1991). Alternately, discursive theoretical analysis about the impact at the macro level has been curiously left unexplored in evaluative studies as in the work of Wiers-Jenssen (1993). Researchers in the psychological disciplines have aspired to present aspects of study abroad, as it affects the individual; however they often achieve this by singling out victims of maladjustment (Furkawa and Shibayama 1993). This type of study introduces relevant information, but perhaps places too much emphasis on the negative aspects of studying internationally. It is important to understand that these foci are interrelated, and affect each other, something which few studies have attempted to explain.

After reviewing related studies, the researcher discovered a knowledge gap in contemporary research on the topic of international study. As an experienced international student herself, the researcher felt as though these studies missed some crucial components that impact the international experience, which warranted further examination. This revelation has implored her to construct a study that offers a more in-depth analysis on the topic, which attempts to identify the effects of international study on identity in a multi-textual context.

Research Problem Statement:

It appears that discrepancies exist between the objectives of international study and the actual outcomes realized. To determine if there is validity to this claim, the following issues must be addressed.

Students' decision to study abroad may be due to divergent pretenses than is tacitly assumed by some researchers, when in fact there may be alternative factors that influence students' choice to study internationally. The unexpected, and perhaps unintended, effect may be that students experience an altered identity. If students are not able to overcome social barriers and integrate abroad, this may suspend their ability to acclimate and therefore stunt further their identity development.

Research Questions:

To attempt to respond to the problem statement above, four questions were devised as a vehicle towards discourse in which to investigate the issues unearthed in the Problem Statement.

- I. What are the motivating factors as to why students study abroad?**
- II. What factors influence identity?**
- III. Does studying internationally lead to an altered identity?**
- IV. Are there factors that hinder international students from integrating into their host country?**

1.3 Research Rational, Focus and Goals

The main topic that will be put under erasure in this thesis will look at the effects of international study on the identities of the students that participate, in hopes of achieving increased understanding about nature of today's international student body. This was done through original research that posed targeted questions by means of a self-completion survey. The questionnaire's first objective was to assemble information about tangible variables, such as the students' family orientation, cultural background, hometown environment, and degree previous international exposure. The second objective was to elucidate intangible variables, such as the effects the experience abroad had on the students in terms of their social relationships, self-definition, preferences, values, as well as their connection to their home and host countries. The combination of these attributes was believed to be influential in identity development.

It has been suggested that study abroad challenges students to renegotiate the boundaries of their identity when viewed through an alternate reality (Dolby, 2004). The main ambition of this research seeks to affirm Dolby's discovery, by investigating whether identity is transformed when exposed to international influences such as international study. This thesis also aspires to ascertain an understanding of the types of social and cultural barriers students typically

encounter abroad. These clashes will be addressed by and proposing rationales suggested by the participants that explain the causes and how the participants resolved these clashes. It is also important to understand the role of the exchange program and how it impacts the factors introduced above.

1.4 Thesis Organization

The thesis shall be organized into five chapters. Chapter One was intended to introduce the topic and briefly orientate the reader about the field of study. This was done by introducing influential studies that aided in the conceptualization of this study. Chapter Two is divided into three sections. Part One introduces some background information which sets the scene by describing the context of the research environment. Part Two contains an introduction to the relevant literature related to this topic. These works will be dissected and critically evaluated for the purpose of highlighting documented discoveries of relevance, as well as identifying knowledge gaps in which to improve upon in this study. Part Three contains a focused discussion of several theoretical approaches and paradigms in which identity can be understood. Chapter Three encapsulates the methodology that was used in the facilitation of the research goals discussed in Chapter One. An in-depth description of the research context and the sample will be made available, as well as an explanation of the statistical approach undertaken. Chapter Four contains an analysis of the statistical findings as well as a discussion of the qualitative discoveries. The fifth and final chapter includes the final analysis and projected impact of the study, as well as some final thoughts about how this topic could be further explored in the future.

2. BACKGROUND, LITERATURE and THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS

2.1 Introduction

The goal of this study as previously stated is to investigate the impact studying abroad has on the identity of university students. This chapter shall introduce influential studies utilized in the conceptualization of this thesis. By reviewing the outcomes of previous research, this allowed the researcher to develop her ideas, and design a suitable instrument in which to collect evidence supportive of a decidedly constructivist approach. This approach attempts to investigate how individuals renegotiate the boundaries of their own identity when transplanted into an unfamiliar culture. Understanding the plasticity of identity was of particular interest in terms of what variables are solid, and which are more fluid.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. Part I offers background information from a broad perspective about the formation and augmentation of human identities in contemporary society. Part II contains a literature review of three studies, each containing relevant discoveries about international study, each focusing on various units of analysis. Part III attempts to orchestrate a multiplicity of contrasting theories, which attempt to answer the question, 'How influential is culture, environment, and experience, in the determination of identity?' There is a vast array of possible explanatory factors and variables, however there is neither the time nor space within the scope of this project to do all of them justice. Therefore the researcher has narrowed the field to encapsulate three sets of core contributors to identity development, each building upon the next, to form the elemental framework of individual identity. The interplay of these themes will be revisited throughout this thesis; in terms of the effects these variables have on international students' comprehension of their own culture as it affects their identity. The chapter will close with a conclusion of the main points of the chapter.

Part I

In sections to follow, the topic of identity development will be explored from a macro perspective in order to offer background about the contextual setting. There shall be an integrated discussion comparing and contrasting various theoretical ideas relating the influence of external factors on identity.

2.2 The Global and the Local Cultural Ecumene: The Fallacy of Plurality

The first photograph taken of the earth from the moon in all its simplicity and fragility is a symbolic representation of the human condition, as suggested by Mike Featherstone, who describes the localizing effect of such an illustration. An earth once composed of scattered isolated communities who knew nothing of each other or the true nature of their planet, were suddenly one. This among other factors has led the populations of the world to have an altered perception of their own community and their place in the emerging global society (Featherstone, 1995).

Historically, once humans became aware existence of others, so began the practice of cultural borrowing, and the movement towards cultural homogenization. Initially, migration and exploration was perhaps the main catalyst for cultural exchanges. Even before exchanges such as the Vikings' voyages of the Middle Ages, and the sixteenth century Spanish and English international conquests, tribal trading led to cultural mixing. Later in history the consolidation of kingdoms throughout Europe, eventually gave way to the phenomenon of nation building (Grillo, 1998). This progression took place over many centuries; however, the current shifts revolutionizing the modern world are happening at speeds never witnessed before in history. The influx of refugees and other foreign nationals crossing borders has created an opportunity to come face to face with cultures from all over the world on a daily basis. Today, modern transportation and technology has made even the most remote corners of the world easily accessible. Globalization has made study abroad commonplace in many parts of Europe. As study abroad programs become less exclusive, and more countries are participating, unilateral global education could become a reality in that not so distant future.

Modernists assert that the accelerated intermingling of culture both physically, and through mediums of technology, leads to increased homogeny and eventually plurality. This seems a somewhat naïve allegation, which has been challenged particularly by post colonialist. Another hypothesis suggests modernity is characterized by constant reflexive cultural trajectories, which are sometime deflected but often absorbed into the local culture altering its very nature. Thus making the intruding culture reflective of the dominant culture, yet also echoing elements of its origin (Tomlinson, 1991). To say that incongruent cultures will inherently become plural has been under-qualified by modernists. To classify a culture as plural carries an air of peaceful coexistence, which cannot be assumed to be true in every circumstance. Intriguingly, it was literary master T.S. Elliot that has underpinned that which most closely depicts the consequence of migration:

The people have taken with them only a part of the total culture...The culture which develops on the new soil must therefore be bafflingly alike and different from the parent culture...In this way, peculiar types of culture-sympathy and culture-clash appear (Elliot, 1949).

The scenario in which Elliot describes was envisioned in the context of colonial expansion; however there are distinct similarities between the effects of colonial diaspora and modern migratory patterns (Bhabha, 1996).

Homi K. Bhabha expands on this rationale by suggesting that these ‘particle cultures’ implant themselves into their new host country forever altering its composition. It is these migrants with foreign culture in tow that provide the link, or as Bhabha calls it, “connective tissue” between multiplicities of cultures to form a distinctly new culture (Bhabha, 1996:54). Bhabha sites the degenerative act of assimilating cultures out of context. He suggests that this transformation leads to social barricades being erected depending on the level of threat felt by the host culture. Social divisions usher in inequalities leading to the suppression of particular aspects of the intersecting culture. In order to facilitate a smooth integration, modification and cultural negotiation must be enacted. Depending on the severity of the cultural re-orientation

disillusionment and internal chaos may follow. These cultural transplants that have one foot in the door of each culture have become known as *hybrids* or cultural *in-betweens* and dwell in a different plane of reality than the locals. Their experiences are mediated by intersubjectivity, and interpreted using dual modalities. They rely on both their familiar cultural origins, as well as local culture to gain understanding and facilitate their adaptation (Bhabha, 1998). This is a survival technique, but from the outside may appear to be natural acclimation, which leads to acceptance within the host country. Some have mistakenly interpreted this transgression as plurality, which in reality is more of a reflexive duality.

2.2.1 One Size Fits All: The Internationalization and Massification of Culture:

‘Kuyaanisqatsi’; the Hopi word meaning ‘life out of balance’, popularised by filmmaker Godfrey Reggio and Francis Ford Coppola, in their 1983 minimalist cult classic film by the same name, offered an artistic portrait of modernity. The film depicts everyday life, in some frames, from afar, in other frames, invasively close up, often at disorientating speeds. Fast-forward and stop motion are used to create an effect that makes life appear to lack of meaning. Discourse about modernity turns more critical as we are presented with images of people in remote villages that do not own a pair of shoes drinking Coca-Cola and jabbering away on mobile phones (Foster, 2002). We see an entire generation of youths that do not know the name of their countries’ leaders, but they know Britney Spears and the entire starting lineup of their Manchester United football club. This commodification and massification movement of culture is generally linked to advances in technology, which make the proliferation of cultural transmissions faster and easier than ever before.

The most pervasive form of mass culture dictation is thought to be the media. From the mid-twentieth century onward there has been a strain of social criticism directed at the impending centralization of culture that is tied very closely to fear of modernity. The famous Orwellian doomsday vision of the future, presented a frightening portrait of a society of android-like proletarians in the grips of capitalistic domination (Orwell, 1950). Most of the left-of-center theorists have expressed similar apprehension about the spread of capitalism, and the commodification of culture. The assumption made by those that see mass culture as dubious,

resonates with postmodernists, who liken humans to sponges, soaking up any consumable commodity including cultural practices. Anti-capitalist sentiments are rooted in the notion that under capitalism; everything has a price, knowledge, innovation, life-style; all of these can be bought and sold (Kidd, 2002). Modern scholars and armchair philosophers alike have long expressed concern about the loss of cultural authenticity with the coming of globalization. Although those that believe in free will insist that the choice exists.

The primordial foundation which modernist theory was born came from that of Adam Smith, who emphasizes the *invisible hand* of the market. His influential theory proposes that individuals are motivated by personal gain, but by exploiting their personal interests they also unintentionally promote the interests of society. The problem that occurs when this theory is put into practice is that markets are not designed to provide for the public good. This is because of the non-excludability of public goods. This means it is difficult for the provider to earn a return on the cost of providing the good (Smith, 1977). Thus we make choices that benefit us personally based on the options available to us, but those with the more spending power have the more influence, which suppresses the will of those less financially inclined. Thus it is not possible to truly suggest free will exists within a capitalist culture.

2.2 2 Cultural Imperialism: the Rise of the West, the Demise of the Rest

Within the lifetime of those born in the second half of the twentieth century, miraculous inventions have fundamentally redirected the lives of those on the ‘inside’, and created amplified disparity for those on the ‘outside’ (Habermas, 1989). Technology in the age of globalization has become the center, and the new core enshrines those that have learned how to capture and exploit it. Nation-States have been replaced by the intangible entity of technology, which at its heart is ‘knowledge’. The West has emerged as the primary proprietor of the technology that is shaping the future of the entire world. As for those populations on the peripheries, they too are being pulled into the vortex toward cultural homogeny, even if it has no context in their daily lives. Without the knowledge, power, and resources to take control of their own destinies, rural, and underdeveloped countries are

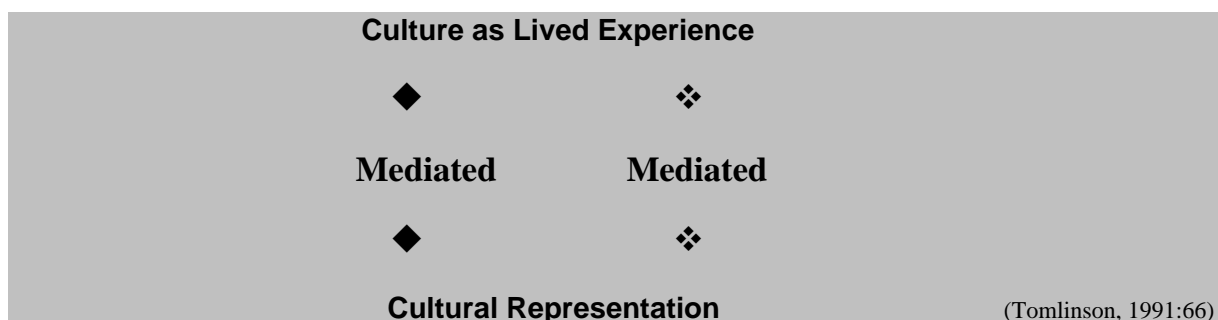
feeling the pressure to conform to ideals not of their own design, which has instigated a growing cultural backlash towards Western culture.

The term cultural imperialism first appeared in the 1960s as a generic incantation of all the evils associated with the Western invasion on the developing world. John Tomlison cautions that the concept is actually a much more reflexive and complex process created by the transmission and interpretation of messages between cultures. Often times the term is used as a rallying cry to gain support against global expansion into new markets for fear of cultural attrition in the receiving communities. Tomlison suggests that the critics are underestimating the intellectual sharpness of the masses.

2.2 3 Cultural Mediation and Interpretation

Tomlison has created a model that represents the internal negotiation that takes place as humans are confronted with new cultural information (See Table A). Tomlison suggests that external influences are mediated before they are consumed, a sort of internal checks and balance system that occurs psychologically and experientially. In other words if we are speaking about the media's influence on a population for example, the media will offer an interpretation of an event, but consumers will first filter the information, then adding past experience to the mix, before ingesting the message. The inner-contextualities of individual life experiences are relevant to the conscious understanding of events. Unfamiliar knowledge is greeted with abstraction until internal negotiating is able to rationalize the new information in a way in which meaning can be derived from it (Tomlison, 1991).

Table A: The Process of Understanding Foreign Concepts and Cultures



This communicative interplay is reminiscent of the children game known to Americans as *Telephone*. An activity where children sit in a circle, whispering the same story from one person to the next until everyone has heard the story, and retold it to another once. Finally the last person to hear the story retells the tale it to the originator, and then group aloud, at which point, everyone laughs at how much the details of the story have changed. Even though each person retold the same story, the human brain unconsciously omits unimportant details, and embellishes aspects of interest, which fundamentally reshapes the intended message.

Tomlison suggests a similar thing happens when ideas are transmitted from one culture to another. The concepts are constantly being reinterpreted, and often the intended meaning is based on a local cultural framework. The researcher is reminded of an interview conducted with CNN's Larry King; with the cast of the popular 1980s American television show *Growing Pains*. This sitcom features the fictitious Seaver family, where the mother is a successful career woman and the father is a stay-at-home dad, as well as a practicing psychologist. Each week heart-warming hijinx would be played out on screen, as the precocious Seaver kids got into trouble. In typical American sitcom fashion, the iconic 'good father' would assign unique, pedagogically correct punishments to the children to teach them a lesson. Week after week a moral lesson was revealed, disguised as good, clean, family entertainment. American audiences find the show to be lightly humorous entertainment fit for pre-teen viewers. Japanese audiences alternately saw the sitcom as a serious self-help show. Japanese parents turned to actor, Alan Thicke, to get sound parenting advice from a 'licensed professional' recalled Thicke, who jovially confessed he has not any specialized training or doctoral certification. In this situation the ideas were transmitted successfully between cultures, but the intent was misread.

Tomlinson goes on to explain how local culture develops. He emphasizes the power of folklore, and tradition as being the evanescence of local culture. He uses the example of the 'love', described as being an emotion that is enhanced by our exposure to love stories. Fictional love can have a direct influence on our own experience and actually form the basis in which our understanding of how love should feel and be expressed. According to

developmentalists; these external influences will determine our behaviour in the future (Crain, 2000).

2.2 4 Globalization and International Study

In terms of international education, the concept seems a natural extension of globalization. As the prevalence of the English language use within the University has increased, in an effort to ensure globally competitiveness so has the flow international students flocking to such programs. This trend has made access to education abroad possible for many, not eligible ever before. Furthermore it has become an attractive option particularly to those seeking a career internationally (Dolby, 2004). As cultures intersect with added frequency, the expansion of education across national border seems a natural step, in line with the general movement of society. Great strides have been made facilitate international students in their sojourns, as it is believed that it is critical in an age of globalization to understand foreign cultures.

Strikingly, students go abroad seeking access to unknown cultures yet often what they find is a near replica of home. Such is the case in many metropolitan centres certainly, but even in remote villages, where one would expect native cultures to be dominant, Western culture may still filter through. Thus traveling abroad is not such a foreign experience as it once was according narrative biographies compiled by Elizabeth Murphy-Lejeune (2002). In Nadine Dolby's study (2004), students reported that everywhere they looked they saw American influences, but slightly re-interpreted to fit the local context.

Despite the centrifugal movement of the economy and popular culture, unfamiliar localized group identities can be a persistent barricade for students attempting to infiltrate another group. This is because group identity offers 'ready-made' social recipes, which act as automatic behavioural responses to certain types of stimulus (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). These sets of behaviours are known as social norms and are acquired in youth though the child rearing process. The problem comes when outsiders enter the symbolic realm of another group, their presence might not be objectionable, but they may inadvertently disrupt the equanimity of the alternative groups. This has a reflexive effect on the individual's social

recipe, because their “thinking-as-usual” social routines are not generating the desired affect (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002:21). Thus long accepted social knowledge is being challenged on the part of both the strangers and the locals, which initiates a process of behavioural augmentation. The transitional period following the arrival of newcomers, seems to lead to the subjugation on outsiders, whom may find themselves relegated to a inferior social stature, until which time they are able to overcome the imposed ‘stranger’ identity.

Migrants, and refugees struggle with social integration issues just as international students do, however because international students are only temporary residents, they may not have the same vested interest in integration in the way permanent residents do. The temporary nature of student diaspora may have an affect on their degree of motivation; the limited time frame may also disallow them to ever experience true acclimation. The strength of the relationship international students forge with each other may be sufficient as far as offering them acceptance into at least that community; however it negates the goal of international study if students are not able to connect with the local culture.

2.2.5 Multiculturalism: The Visible Invisibility of Minority Culture

Perhaps multiculturalism is an irreconcilable concept because its grand goal is unattainable without dismissing some of its most omnipresent statutes. The lore of multiculturalism has inscribed images of people of different cultures, religions and races, expressing themselves in the image and likeness of their specific culture. This rainbow of variation, as we wish to believe, shines more brightly precisely because of this variation. Therefore those that have achieved a multicultural society will interact with people of an alternate background productively, positively, and perhaps even gleefully. The problem becomes clear when the question is posed; whose definition of ‘productive’, ‘positive’ and ‘gleeful’ is being referenced?

Thus we have located the Achilles-heel of multiculturalism; determining the authenticator of social acceptability. If individualism is the doctrine, then no center can exist in which to

determine the mode of cultural association between individuals, thus the process is ineffectual. Bhabha reissues a concept presented by T.S. Elliot; in which he describes minorities being either *too visible*, and therefore unable to fit in with the dominant culture or being *too invisible*, therefore suppressed by the dominate culture (Elliot, 1949 and cited in Bhabha, 1996). Daniel Yon (2000), describes that process of assimilation as a cycle of ‘otherness’, suggesting that foreigners become less foreign as new foreigners arrive, making the previous foreigner ‘less foreign’. He seems to indicate it is not that anything has actually changed, foreigner just become less visible over time (2000).

Perhaps it is unfair to suggest that it is even possible for international students to become integrated into local society. Based on the assessments above; those foreigners that have lived most their lives in an alternate society may never become truly integrated. Thus there seems to be little hope for foreign student, which spend only a semester or two abroad, to become integrated. Perhaps peaceful coexistence is the summit of reasonable expectations. The rationale for this seemingly irrational behaviour is that humans cannot seem to free themselves from history, suggests Charles Taylor (1992). He uses the example of trains; too many times we have seen that, although they use a specific timetable, often they are late, thus we learn to not be surprised when they appear a minute or two behind schedule. We become distrustful of things that take place over time, because they can easily be aggravated by certain conditions. We accept that discrimination recedes at varying paces, thus we cannot reasonable expect it to instantaneously dissipate (Taylor, 1992).

2.3 Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism, Memory and Imagining

Much of modern discursive theory related to nationalism and cosmopolitanism is rooted in the works of the Age of Enlightenment period in Europe, particularly that of Rousseau and Kant. Both thinkers proclaimed that *self-mastery* and the individuals’ ability to will their own actions would lead to emancipation from the dull-drums of the un-enlightened world, thus beckoning the *awakening* and *self-realization* of mankind (Rousseau, 1959; Kant, 1949, cited in Brint, 2001). Conversely, each took a divergent path to reach this intellectual nirvana, Rousseau, the ‘nationalist’, and Kant the ‘cosmopolite’.

Rousseau stressed that *common memory* was a powerful identity-forming agent and therefore providing an authentic environment in which to nurture genuine identity development was key. Rousseau hints that cosmopolitanism is superficial and leads to self-estrangement (Rousseau, 1959). Suggesting that the will of the self cannot be silenced, and shall ultimately overrule imitated civility, just as an actor playing a part is only a facsimile of the character they portray. No matter how skillful the performer, fragments of the person playing the part will be visible to the audience.

The term *nationalism* itself seems to leave a bad taste in the mouths of modern man, particularly Europeans, whom associate nationalism with extreme jingoism, which not what Rousseau was suggesting. This pervasiveness of the word was discussed by Patrick Hall, who suggests that to properly analysis the topic of nationalism it has to be decided whether nationalism is an “ideological position” or a “sociological phenomenon” (Hall, 1998:22). Hall indicates that nationalistic values can be extreme, but they can also be completely natural expressions of local culture. Benedict Anderson defines a nation as an “imagined community”, which indoctrinates “the being together of strangers” which brilliantly exemplifies a means of creating unity within a group of individuals that perhaps otherwise would have no common interests. (Anderson, 1991:6) This notion seems necessary in order to achieve political order and strengthen individuals’ compliance to an agenda that benefits the country economically and socially. However, a concern related to nationalism in modern society, is the creation of ‘us’ and ‘them’. This leads to a indiscreet negative subconscious effects on the human psyche, which may influence people to be less open to other cultures. This can have a damaging affect on international relations, an essential component in an informational society. It is this stigma that study abroad programs attempts to combat as part of their mission.

Kant suggested *imagination* is the most powerful identity-forming agent, and that which truly guides humans towards self-actualization. Kant calls identity formation an “aesthetic experience”, that required detachment from predetermined social functionalism (Kant, 1949, cited in Brint, 2001:7). Kant regarded memory as the shackles that prevented self-exploration.

Art and beauty, according to Kant are universal, and therefore imperative to boundless social development. Kant argued that it is lingering fragments of national memory, which constrains society, making it unable to transcend the boundaries of imagination (1949).

Transnationalism or cosmopolitanism as explained by Jonathan Friedman, describes a member of an intellectual group that can only exist on the peripheries of society, “participating in many worlds, without becoming part of them” (Friedman, 2000:204). By laying no claims to any particular culture, this congregation would be unlikely prejudiced by national interests. Friedman also cautions that one the prerequisites of cosmopolitanism, is a high degree of sameness and like-mindedness among its assemblage. This seems to indicate that the masses could never hope to become truly transnational because of differences in class, standard of living, and other selective prerequisite of cosmopolitanism. However, Friedman also indicates that authenticity is not a factor, and that these are not authentic identities. Cosmopolites decide what features appeal to them and select from the cultural buffet that is available to through global exposure. Thus their identity may be a patchwork of self-constructed attributes. The common denominator on which cosmopolitanism relies is exposure and knowledge. Friedman’s sentiments echo the thoughts of Rousseau in that, it is clear that he is not entirely convinced that cosmopolitanism offers any great benefit and is furthermore, unrealistic in contemporary society which is plagued with inequality (Friedman, 2000).

One modern theorist that has received a great deal of attention and has become the unofficial spokeswoman for advocacy of cosmopolitanism is Martha Nussbaum. Nussbaum is particularly contemptuous of civics education in the United States; she sites the need to teach human rights in public education. He suggests moving away from the current curriculum, which she says; transmits subliminal elitism and racism, trans-mediated through the implied importance of national loyalty (Nussbaum, 1996 cited in Abowitz, 2002). Nussbaum contends that self-knowledge can be gained by being globally informed. The value of this exercise is having the ability to dispel entrenched normative discriminative illusions, and develop compassion for humanity (Nussbaum, 1996).

Kathleen Abowitz (2002) suggests that Cosmopolitanism as described by Nessbaum (1996) is too idealist, aligning herself with Friedman (2000), says that few societies exist that have the capacity to address the tasks put forth by cosmopolitans. Even within a highly homogeneous, educated, prosperous country, difference still may derail the cosmopolitan agenda. Socio-economic, religious, and ideological difference can create great rifts in society that cannot simply be abridged with a prescription of cosmopolitanism. However with globalization, a certain degree of transnationalism has already been realized as more societies become interconnected (Abowitz, 2002).

In terms of international students it seems that those that decided to study abroad have a predisposition that makes them more open to other cultures. Thus it is unusual to find a hardcore nationalist among the international student populations of the world. This study hopes to uncover if it is predetermined multicultural conditioning that has made certain students more prone to international living, such as Nessbaum alludes to. An alternative assessment could be that free will has allowed international students that feel discontent in their home society to seek out a more desirable culture, an idea akin to Kantian ideology.

Rousseau suggests that nationalism is an extremely strong integral attribute to identity, which may inadvertently become apparent despite efforts to suppress it. Dolby suggests that when students that normally define themselves as cosmopolitan go abroad, their normally silent nationalistic side becomes evident (Dolby, 2004). She explains that it is not because of a love of country, but rather a means to rationalize new information in a familiar context (2004). This period of adjustment, experienced by international students, points to how strong an influence national culture actually has on individuals.

2.4 Religion in an Increasingly Secular World

One of the first and most powerful cultural developments of the pre-modern world was that of religion. Individuals still define themselves based on their religion, but it has become a less frequently occurring cultural marker in modern Western society. As society began to move

towards modernity, religion became more widely questioned. A major contributor to this ideological shift was the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origins of Species* (1859). Darwin's influence coupled with the onset of the industrial revolution initiated a spiritual transition towards pragmatism in the Western world, the effects of which are still being felt. In Western post-industrial society, religious service attendance has been steadily declining in the developed world despite waves of influx during times of crises (Smart, 1990). However, in many parts of the world religion is still the main artery that all social and cultural associations much pass through. The decline of religion in the developed world is often linked to stability both socially and economically. However, there is no definitive proof that the process of development is directly linked to a decline in religious participation.

Why then religion seems to be increasing in popularity in the developing world, and why some have turned to fundamentalism, seems to be symptomatic of latest wave of modernity. Barry Smart suggests a causal link exists between highly religious society and the population feeling secure (1990). Whether the populace is confident that they will have enough food to sustain them, whether they feel safe, and if they believe their government is protecting their interests is thought to be attributed to the relative strength of religion in that specific society. Religion functions because people are conditioned to want to be on the inside, and religions teaches that they way to be on the inside is to follow a specific doctrine. Having a self-affirming safe-haven where one can surround themselves with other likeminded individuals that they feel are trustworthy, creates a social alliance in which people can take solace in mutual solidarity. This speaks to the power and influence of religion in the developing world where political instability that has devastated communities and created circumstantial poverty, leads people to look beyond the material world for comfort and hope.

Clifford Geertz offers this rationale of the benefits of religion; "sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos" (Geertz, 1973:89). Geertz goes on to say that religion has a double effect; it offers its worshipers meaning in a conceptual form which can be presupposed will shapes their outlook on life and therefore their actions. It is also a vis-à-vis relationship, the religion itself can be seen as an organic entity, which is influenced by its membership,

thus re-interpretation, although arduously slow at times, is occurring and reinvigorates the path of the religious rite to meet the needs of the community it serves (Geertz, 1973).

Nevertheless religion is a divisive issue. Regardless of one's orientation towards religion, it affects every society, and is one of the major identity forming agents. Depending on which society one is born into, certain culturally accepted omnipresent symbols subconsciously remind them of the values their society was built on. Even in the most secular of nations, exposure to religious symbolism has affected aspects of our identity even if it is an expression of defiance. Thus these subtle identity markers become more visible when encountered by others that do not share the same beliefs as the dominant religion. As the world is pulled together through global networks uncomplimentary denominations and religions may encounter culture clashes when integrated.

When international students embark on sojourns abroad, depending on their religious orientation, they may be an advantage if they share similar beliefs as the host country, or at a disadvantage if they do not. Chances are that if their religious beliefs are in line with the dominant culture, the country will seem less foreign, making the acclimation process swifter. Likewise, if the international student holds beliefs that are different than that of the host country, they may find it more difficult to acclimate.

Part II

Part Two of the chapter contains literature relevant to the topic of international students and their experiences abroad. The conglomeration of these studies provided the basic assumptions, which were used in construction and analysis of this thesis.

2.5 Diaspora Down-Under

As more students than ever before embark on study abroad tours one would expect the world to become less remote, foreign cultures less alien, and greater universal acceptance and appreciation of human variation realized. At least that is what the marketing behind study abroad programs in the United States suggests in advertising campaigns (Dolby, 2004).

Nadine Dolby, of Northern Illinois University Department of Education, began her investigation of the plasticity of national identity from a diasporic perspective by focusing on American undergraduate students' reflections of their experiences in Australia as part of study abroad programs sponsored through their university. Dolby used a qualitative and interpretive methodological design in which to collect and analyze her data. Her primary argument for incorporating this type of a model was to elucidate meaning from the students' experiences, which aided in the internal recognition and sometimes renegotiation of their national identity to something resembling a cosmopolitan or at least a *postnational* identity.

The sample group included twenty-six American students, who during the spring semester of 2001, studied in various cities throughout Australia. The students' majors varied, but all attended a large research university, which Ms. Dolby dubbed "University of the Midwest". Of the twenty-six participants, twenty were female, and six were male. The sample was not entirely representative in terms of male to female ratio of study abroad programs internationally; however, it is indicative of the general trend that more women than men tend to study abroad. Twenty-three of the participants were clearly Caucasians, which is

representative of American study abroad statistics. Nationally, Dolby reports, 82.9 percent of candidates consider themselves white (2004). It is believed that Dolby derived this figure from the *Open Door* report (IIE, 2002), but the researcher was not able to confirm this exact figure, as the statistics is regularly updated. The participants were interviewed twice, once before they left in the autumn, and once after they returned a year later. During the time between interviews, an unforeseen rudimentary contextual change occurred, that being the events of September 11, 2001 in Washington, New York, and Pennsylvania. These events certainly must have had some bearing on the outcomes Dolby derived, however she insists that it did not.

For many of the students, heightened awareness of their ‘otherness’ abroad, initially forced them to retreat into what James Clifford refers to as, “identity as property” (Clifford, 1985, cited in Dolby, 2004:15). Lauren Berlant suggests a related condition, which she calls “infantile citizenship”, which Dolby uses to rationalize her sample’s behaviour (Berlant, 1993, cited in Dolby, 2004:15). The underlying concept behind these theories is the same; and has to do with certain tendencies people exhibit when confronted by negative stereotypes about themselves. Personal attacks on people based on factors they cannot control, such as; nationally, culture, or race, commonly result in a reaction of either complacency or hostility directed at the perpetrator. An emphatic defensive reaction can cause a regression further in to an infantile citizenry role. Those affected by this condition may display what Berlant refers to as a “patriotic trace” (1993, cited in Dolby, 2004:15). A Patriotic trace can be describes as the antithesis of an allegiance to a country based on knowledge and information. In fact it usually based on emotion rather than reason (Dolby, 2004). A complacent attitude can lead to the internalization of a doctrine that has been authored by outsiders, and may be a largely inaccurate portrayal of the person. This explanation is similar to the double hermeneutic effect as described by Goffman (1968), which will be further discussed in Part Three. The infantile citizen wears this caricature of himself or herself with pride, because they feel helpless to overcome it. Dolby’s basic assumption about identity in transition is drawn from these concepts. In her research she observed that several of her participants struggled to overcome these imposed identities but were ultimately able recast their identity during their course of study. She suggests that this achievement signals the beginning stages of the development of a postnational identity.

Postnationalism occurs when the state is no longer the main articulator of its citizen's identity. The postnationalist condition is porous and constantly in flux, as outsiders become influential in the process of shaping national identity to almost the same degree as insular forces. Thus citizens, through global networks, become aware of the discrepancy between how they see themselves and how others perceive them. This can lead individuals to resist the articulations coming from the state or the nation, choosing to subscribe to an alternative self-definition than that laid-out by their countrymen (2004).

As a result of this investigation into identity, Dolby discovered that many of the students she interviewed had returned from abroad with an altered sense of identity. Many of the students recognized that while they had not given much thought to the unique character of their American identity, the Australians they met had. The revelation prompted them to re-examine their identity. This misalignment of perception required internal identity negotiation in order to ascertain an authentic identity.

The insight Dolby was able to draw from her interviews seemed to indicate that a transforming effect had indeed occurred among the majority of the students. Yet, as an American, living in the United States during the time surrounding September 11th, the researcher can attest that much identity negotiation and transformation was observable in many Americans during this period. Not since the Civil War had the country become so ideologically divided in the United States. Thus, Dolby perhaps should have considered the contextual change in the national climate as a significant unforeseen influence on her findings.

Another important factor related to the sample, to keep in mind, was that the participants were from the Midwest. With the exception of the city of Chicago, this is an area of the country this is arguably one of the least diverse in the United States. While demographics are constantly shifting in the United States, it is still a safe assumption to say that these participants' home environment is going to be considerably less multicultural than larger cities on the coasts. This is going to have an effect, as they are presumably less experienced at interacting with foreigners.

What can be learned from Dolby's research as it pertains to this study; is that even in countries as similar as the United States and Australia there can be quite a lot of cultural difference that can be equally distressing as it is fascinating for international students. It appears that just one semester abroad will not lead to a thorough understanding of the host country but it does appear to be enough time for students to begin to look outside themselves. Thus giving the students time to reflect on their own family, education, community, and national culture to determine how great an influence it really has on their identity. The students also reported that this was a somewhat humbling experience as the students went from, majority to minority and from 'normal' to 'different'. The grand goal of most international exchange programs is to engender compassion for others, and the experience these students had seems to suggest that this goal was achieved.

2.6 Gone A' Viking: Norwegian Students Abroad

Norway has a long history of sending students abroad. The reason for this has largely to do with the fact that Norway's first university was not established until 1811 in stark contrast to the longstanding Anglo-American university tradition. Prior to the establishment of the University, Norwegians traveled primarily to Denmark to study. The current catalyst for international study has to do with a shortage space for the increasing student body. Medical students, civil engineers, and others in scientific related fields compose the majority of students that seek to study outside Norway, due to a lack of capacity domestically, and tough competition for places in the existing programs (Wiers-Jenssen, 1993).

Jannecke Wiers-Jenssen of the Norwegian Institute for Studies in Research and Higher Education (NIFU) conducted a study of the motivation that prompts Norwegian students to studying abroad. She also focused on factors such as; the students' level of satisfaction with regards to accommodations, quality of teaching, and administrative support in one of thirty-four different host countries. This was a primarily quantitative study, as she relied on an exploratory questionnaire to procure much of her data. However, she also conducted separate qualitative interviews, utilizing segments of the same sample to generate supplemental information to qualify her research. In total 1,159 surveys were completed, 57% of the respondents were female. The average age of the respondents was twenty-five and the

majority of the participants were undergraduates. 71 percent of the sample had at least one parent that had received higher education, which is higher than the average domestic student population that stands at 48 percent in Norway (Statistics Norway, 1998, cited in Wiers-Jenssen, 1993).

Wiers-Jenssen suggests that Norwegian students are motivated by several factors. One motivating factor is that they have a financial advantage that many other countries are not able to offer. Most Norwegian students qualify for financial assistance from “Lånekassen”, the State Educational Loan Fund, which is how most Norwegians fund their studies abroad. This coupled with the fact that Norwegians speak English proficiently, makes study abroad particularly in North America and the English Commonwealth, an especially attractive opportunity. Wiers-Jenssen points out that the latest hotspot for Norwegians to study is Australia. From 1996 to 2001 the percentage of Norwegians being exported to Australia increases 4552 percent. The United Kingdom and the United States remains well established destination. A recent addition, which Norwegians have begun to express interest in is Eastern European countries, as courses are increasingly being conducted in English.

The international experience, as evaluated by students, was overall enjoyable; however the main issue the student struggled with was attaining information. Learning how to navigate their way through the bureaucracy of the host country was of particular concern. Generally, the Norwegian students felt that they had no problems making friends and did not feel lonely, although a few said they missed their family and friends. The students that were the least satisfied were those students that were in programs that did not offer opportunity for integration with the rest of the student body. This was largely the case in many of the Eastern European programs. Students that lived in ‘international student ghettos,’ also felt somewhat isolated. Wiers-Jenssen discovered a bivariate link between student’s satisfaction and their ability to feel integrated into the local student population.

Wiers-Jenssen’s response to the discovery that Norwegian students appear to be highly motivated to study abroad does not infer that Norwegian students have any special traits that

predetermine their international ambitions. Rather, she suggests that there is a distinct difference in motivation between students that choose to study abroad and students that choose to study domestically. The suggestion being, that those students that study abroad are of a specific breed of students, which are more motivated, resilient, and skillful than the average domestic student. This discovery is valuable, but lacks any explanation, which might explain the benefit Norwegian society. From the standpoint of the researcher, it seems that study abroad in the Norwegian context, is a way of outsourcing the burden of educating students in specialized academic or technical fields. This practice actually saves the state money, yet it also jeopardizes losing Norway's most clever individuals to better opportunities abroad, a side-effect that perhaps should not be celebrated. If the Norwegian economy staggers, it seems that this could be a real problem for Norway. However, not mentioned in this article, is the fact that Norway is also experiencing an increase in the number of international students it receives. This may actually end up balancing the number of educated residents in Norway, assuming that many foreign nationals may choose to remain in Norway.

Weirs-Jenssen suggests in her final comments that Norwegian students have many advantages at their disposal which makes study abroad more expectant than in many other countries, and as it sends such a large proportion of its' student population abroad. She does briefly make mention of the notion of 'brain drain' cautioning the potential danger it poses. Yet, it is her assertion that as long as the Norwegian economy is good in and unemployment remains low, students will have an incentive to return despite the fact that her research uncovered that 30 percent of her sample group said that they would actively be seeking employment abroad.

Wiers-Jenssen has conducted a very informative study which has been methodically expedited, well researched, and has introduced many variables of interest which this thesis hopes to further explore. Wiers-Jenssen did not explore identity related topics specifically, but has offered details which point an altered identity, such as the figure which, states that 30 percent of the students intend to seek careers internationally upon completion of their education. This discovery seems to strongly indicate studying abroad has redirected the futures of those that participate.

2.7 Evaluating of the ERASMUS Experience

ERASMUS is the acronym used to annotate an ‘action scheme for mobility of University Students.’ This was the pet project that grew out of a meeting of the Commission of the European Community in 1987. The goal was to enable ten percent of the higher education population in Europe to spend a significant term of study in another member state. The commission created a built-in amendment that ensured that the program would be evaluated regularly. In this section of the chapter, the evaluation of the 1988-1989 school year, as carried out by Friedhelm Maiworm, Wolfgang Stuebe, and Ulrich Teichler will be featured.

3,212 completed questionnaires were included in the evaluation process. Of those surveyed 54 percent were female, and 83 percent of those females studied language. Overall, the highest subject representation was business, followed by languages, law, and engineering. Of the students included in the survey, an overwhelming majority came from France, Germany, and the United Kingdom; however Spain, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Ireland, Greece, Denmark, and Portugal were also represented. Another trend noted in the study was that 80 percent of the students had spent time abroad since the age of 15, and 48 percent had spent time in the host country that they studied in, prior to participating in the ERASMUS program (Maiworm, et al, 1991).

The survey was very in-depth and addressed many of the same aspects of studying abroad as in the Wiers-Jenssen study, including satisfaction with classes, teachers, accommodations, and administrative support. The students were surveyed twice, once before they left on their sojourn and shortly after their return.

One of the goals of the ERASMUS program was to help students overcome negative stereotypes that may exist in the students’ home country about others. An unexpected discovery was that some students’ held stereotypes that were actually reinforced as a result of firsthand experience abroad that fortified their belief. The students’ individual life experiences and early socialization into the host country was significant in determining their experience

(Maiworm, et al.1991). The students' responses seemed to be in reaction to previous experiences. The team identified many of the social integration problems experienced as being linked to inability to understand the local language.

The distribution of language ability was looked at in this study, and striking national differences were apparent in the students' ability to learn foreign language. Students from the United Kingdom and Ireland reported having the most difficulty learning the local language. This should not be surprising, as English has become so prevalent world-wide that these students would be less likely to have practice speaking various languages in the way many other countries do, as matter of necessity. Students that studied in Belgium and The Netherlands also reported having trouble learning the language. This was linked to the fact that in the south, particularly in Italy; Dutch and Flemish were not an available foreign language taught in universities. Generally these students had absolutely no background in the languages, which made picking it up more challenging, which affected their ability to feel integrated.

Cultural differences did not appear to hinder students' ability to excel in their new environment, however, their surveys revealed that their preferences could be linked to where they were from. For example Danish students found urban life to be satisfying, while Greek and Portuguese students found it disagreeable. Female students from the North of Europe that studied in the South, expressed some distress about the male/ female relationships abroad. The types of problems and concerns the students had related to culture were, however, secondary to their concerns about their accommodations, and personal safety.

Overall there was a 22 percent positive increase in students' opinion about how worthwhile the program was compared to the expectations expressed before their sojourns. Additionally, most of the students declared that it was a valuable experience that they would recommend to others. The ERASMUS program achieved the objective of offering a meaningful cultural experience for its participants, but did they actually learn anything? Yes, and no; how well the students did showed no clear trend other than their success was linked to their ability to understand the language of instruction. Since many of the students received the study grant

based on having good grades to begin with, it was natural that these students succeeded in keeping up their grades (Maiworm, et al.1991).

Roughly seventeen years has passed since the data was collected either, and certainly many of the problems the students encountered have been addressed, but to put it to the test many of these aspects of international study will be reopened in this thesis. The goal will not be to evaluate the ERASMUS program specifically, but rather to attempt to understand what issues persist even today. Seventeen years ago, Europe was very different; the Soviet Union still existed, and the European Union as we know it today had not yet been established. Since then, European culture has evolved unitarily, leading to altered 'European identities' created by increased cooperation between east and west, and north and south. Despite economic unification, stereotypes seem to linger on, and do influence how Europeans see each other.

Variables related to identity were not explored in this study. However as in the Wiers-Jenssen study, it is possible to read between the lines to ascertain knowledge about how students were affected by the experience made evident through the responses they offered.

Precise details about this study cannot be replicated in a present day model due to the fact that too much time has passed, and too many social changes have occurred internationally for it to be comparable. However, it can be seen as a structural basis, by allowing the researcher to see what has changed in the time since this the study was conducted. It is likewise fascinating to look at issues related to study abroad, which have remained unchanged. Even after so many years of monumental cultural shifts, many of the same issue are still problematic. Some of the responses, such those related to the difference in gender relations between north and south, and language barriers, are still relevant today, and worth exploring in a modern context.

2.8 Literature Review Summation

The contributions made by these three studies was useful in establishing expectations about the types of challenges international students confront when they embark on sojourns abroad, as well as how the experience affected them personally.

The Dolby study was the most in-depth of the three and relevant to this thesis because she explored identity transformation as initiated by international study. The Weirs-Jenssen study was critically important to understanding variables specific to Norway and Norwegians. For the researcher it was crucial to be cognizant of the context and patterns of exchange pertaining to Norway. This was important because the entire sample group interacted with Norway and Norwegian either as inbound or outbound international students. The European Commission study was also central to this research because it focused on the ERASMUS program. ERASMUS or an ERASMUS subsidiary program sponsored the majority of the sample utilized in this thesis; therefore it was vital to understand the mission and evolution of the program. The amalgamation of these studies supports an underlying message that international study is valuable and worthy of expansions and constant improvement. They indicate that support should take the form of outreach to under-represented segments of the domestic student population that would otherwise not have the opportunity to study abroad, in the form of individual grants and increased program funding. Another factor the researchers seem to come together on is the need to preserve the integrity and mission of these programs so that its purpose is not defeated.

Where these three studies fall short is having the ability to delineate what it is about international study that makes it valuable to all involved. What are the implications on society and the individual, and do the desires of the individual negate the needs of society? In the research mentioned above, the stance is clear; that the individual is the primarily beneficiary, but that there is a reflexive effect on society as a whole. What is peculiar is that their research

suggest otherwise. If cosmopolitanism is the end result, which it appears to be, then the disbanding of allegiance to any particular society follows. Thus another decision has to be made that asserts whether the goal of international study is perpetuate globalization, the fallout being a homogenization of identity. These issue lies on the periphery of the topic, but are essential to explore if one is to declare that international study is indeed valuable.

It has been well documented in these studies that some change has occurred within the identity of those that studied abroad. However, identification of those entities, which are the catalyst for this change, has not been adequately underpinned in previous research. Thus the researcher had identified a gap in knowledge, which can be abridged by attempting to locate specific variables that respond favourably when internationally conditioned. This relates to the grander goal discussed above, which is to determine whether the practice of international study is valuable and to whom. To do this it has to be established whether international study truly has a transforming affect on the identity of those that participate, which, as of late has not been sufficiently proven. Within the confines of this thesis it may still not be possible to provide such evidence, but it is a primordial step that must be taken if new knowledge is to be uncovered.

PART III

In the third part of this chapter, the discussion will transition into theoretical discourse about relevant theories, which attempt to offer explanations about the interplay between culture and identity. The goal shall be to assemble the theoretical foundation, in which to frame the analysis of the outcomes derived during this thesis.

2.9 Culture: A Brief Encyclopedic Anthology

Defining culture as underlined by Raymond Williams is a complex undertaking because of evolutionary shifts in language, which has added different emphasis to the various aspects of culture. To speak of culture, according to a nineteenth century humanist for example, it would be automatically assumed that what was meant was ‘*high culture*’¹ (Williams, 1981).

Traditionally, cultural difference was measured by degree of civility. Groups isolated from Western influence were usually deemed to be uncivilized and therefore backward or lacking ‘culture’. Today the meaning generally takes on a more macro definition referring to culture as ‘*a way of life*’. However, it can also be used in the traditional sense referring to ‘art’ or ‘intellectual creation’, making it either a material object, or a form of social capital. This distinction is further complicated when viewed through the various intellectual and epistemological disciplines. Warren Kidd reminds us that one can view culture from many different angles including; origin of values, language, religion, nationality, behavioural norms, manners, art, architecture, standards, and rituals. Thus we can see that cultural assemblages can produce a cornucopia of outputs, and a wide spectrum of variation (Kidd, 2002).

In order to apply a theoretical framework in which to discuss culture, a decision must be made that explains the nature of culture, and how it functions. The porthole to discourse about

¹. *High Culture*: “contact with the best which has been thought or said in the world” (Arnold, Matthew, 1869)

culture generally starts with theories of socialization. A point of contention among theorist involves the contrasting stance each takes regarding the *activity* or *passivity* of social learning. Our first fork in the road towards understanding, is determining how culture functions. This requires us to make an assumption about the existence of predetermination. Predetermination is associated with *passivity*, and is the antithesis of the other option known free will. Free will is associated with *activity*, and is the voluntary initiation of self-directed intervention (Kidd, 2002). The second divide involves a delineation of graduated paradigms.

What must be determined next is the nature and influence of culture on identity and social development. This requires the application of the accepted assumptions related to predetermination made at the previous junction. If one accepts the idea of predetermination, paradigms such as Functionalism or Marxism would be at their disposal a both accept the ontological stance that predestination exists. If one believes in free will, then Constructivism or Non-Essentialism would be a logical choice, as both of these suggest that predestination does not exist, but in fact free will is the determinant factor in human behaviour. Otherwise known as the ‘top-down or ‘bottom-up’ debate between Essentialism and Non-Essentialism; the difference has to do with the dissemination of culture and identity. Essentialists suggest it is dictated by the dominant culture. Non-Essentialists suggest cultural transmissions begin when individuals initiate a cultural trajectory which moves upwards and outwards.

2.9 1 Identity as Dictated by the Dominant Culture

An example of ideologies that assumes passivity such as Functionalism and Marxism, both uphold the belief that humans are conformist. According to these paradigms, humans’ primal instinct tells them to follow the pack, if not by human nature, then the systematic domination of a capitalistic hierarchy. This creates a culture that is characterized by a precise division of labour. Marxists asserts that this division is the cause of much of the oppression of the lower classes, which leads to conflict (Marx and Engles, 1985). Functionalist such as Durkheim, recognizes this hierarchy an intrinsically necessary means to maintain order, but suggests it creates social harmony rather than struggle (Durkheim, 1938).

An offspring of Marxism, emphasized by Jürgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School is known as Critical Theory. Weber, Freud, and Durkheim were also influential in the composition of this theory (Habermas, 1989, cited in Asley, 1990). A major theme of Critical Theory is that language and communication play a central role in the dictation and spread of culture, which is transmitted through the public sphere (Habermas, 1989). Habermas incorporates the idea of “rationality” of the Weberian variety, which is based on communal goals, complimented by the concept of “instrumental action” (Habermas, 1987 and cited in Kidd, 2002:81). Habermas believes this alone can break the cycle of capitalistic expansion, which Habermas see as the dubious, yet a natural movement of society (Habermas, 1987).

If the researcher were to apply Critical theory to the research problems presented in this thesis, it would require that the researcher accept predetermination. Thus, the reason why students study abroad would be explained away as it was their destiny, and predetermined by their environment. Their desire to study abroad would be because of exposure to a public sphere in which gave them the idea in the first place. Furthermore, the students’ evaluations of the experiences in terms of identity shifts would be inconsequential because they would be under the spell of dominant culture. Thus identity is so manipulated by the public sphere according to Critical theory; which means it would not be unauthentic to begin with.

The researcher supposes it may be possible to locate a statistical relation between variables related to environment and study abroad, however the researcher is unconvinced that predetermination is a valid claim. Despite being influenced by Neo-Marxist ideas, the researcher aligned herself more closely with paradigms that presume free will always intervenes. Therefore the theory is not a good fit for this particular thesis, although certain aspects were taken into consideration.

2.9 2 Identity as Actively Constructed

Those theories that embrace free will, have adopted a constructivist paradigm, however they accentuate different nuances, and divergent rationales. Stuart Hall regards identity as a work

“in progress” meaning that humans are always adding new attributes and dismissing others until they are satisfied (Hall, 1996:2).

Erving Goffman takes a slightly pessimistic stance about identity formation. He describes modern identities as being characterised as either stereotypically ‘normal’ or ‘stigmatic’ dependant on the degree of conformity towards the dominant culture. Deviant behaviour is seen as threatening to ‘normal’ people, and therefore generates negative social repercussions for those that choose not to follow unspoken social codes established by the dominant culture. Goffman sites the phenomenon of the *Double Hermeneutic* effect, which occurs when other make uninformed judgements about people before they get to know them, which lays the groundwork for an imposed identity (Goffman, 1968). It is because of this phenomenon that humans naturally strive to become ‘normal’. Thus, although free will exists, humans are actively choosing to conform when there is a social benefit in doing so.

Interactionalist Pierre Bourdieu, subscribes to neither identity activity nor passivity, rather he suggests that choices are made subconsciously based on previous life experiences, or as he calls it ‘practice’. He calls this idea ‘habitus’, which suggests that humans are habitual in their activities. The determination of how the structure functions is based on interchangeable principles grounded in conforming tendencies. Bourdieu indicates identity is governed by four elemental factors, “time, space, unorchestration, and improvisation” (Bourdieu, 1977, cited in Kidd, 2002: 71). Thus identity development is left somewhat to chance. Bourdieu suggests that people move through life at uneven tempos along the same general route, and it is because of this lack of orchestration that the patterns begin to look different over time (Bourdieu, 1977). This brings to mind the act of ants marching, which exemplifies this type of socialization. From a distance the ants seem to be following the same path, however upon closer analysis, there are slight deviation in the route, perhaps one ant lost the scent, or perhaps a small twig fell obstructing the original path which required the need for improvisation, since the old route was no longer possible, thus forever altering the path for future generations of ants.

Anthony Giddens put fourth a slightly different social equation, known as Structuration theory which takes a quasi-constructivist stance, which implies that socialization from birth is

passive in the early stages of development; however as with all learning, the more familiar one becomes with an environment, the more proficient one becomes at manipulating it. According to this theory, the skillful people figure out how to move around freely with the confines of the system (Giddens, 1991, cited in Bryant & Jary, 2001). The only hindrance on their freedom has to do with human's inability to choose from which part of the structure they begins. Giddens sees the relationship between the 'structure' and the 'agents' of the structure (the people), as having a "symbiotic relationship" (Giddens, 1984, cited in Kidd, 2002:79). This interdependency means that based on the type and timing of the induction of new agents, and the outgoing of other agents, will ultimately have an influence on the character of the structure itself (Giddens, 1984).

Giddens suggests modernity has lead to certain degree of plurality among identities, but also ambiguity (Giddens, 1991). Giddens puts forth the idea that human identity is constrained by the body we are endowed with, meaning that, what we cannot control, entities such as our body, limits our ability to augment our identity. People can adorn their bodies, and wear a facial expression of our choosing, but there is a pre-conceived notion within every society that defines what is attractive and normal. An individuals' ability to conform to these ideals determines how others see them, which in turn has a reflexive effect on how they see themselves, and therefore what they aspire to be like (Giddens, 1991, cited in Kidd, 2002). Echoing the thoughts of Goffman (1968), Giddens seems to support the idea that we will present ourselves differently depending on the situation, which is dictated by the dominant culture. This signals that there is a certain degree of intermediation between self-identity and social constraints. Thus the choices people make are directly influenced by the society they live in despite the free will.

The researcher has adopted Structuration theory as her main theoretical model in which to understand identity transformation, and embellish the application by introducing elements derived from the Interactionalist approach. The researcher also readily admits that Marxist ideology has influenced her assumptions in terms of early social development. The researcher sees traces of Marx in the writing of Giddens and Bourdieu, both of the latter believe in that identity is actively constructed, which Marx did not, making a bit of a stretch to compare

them. However, Giddens has a certain amount of Marxist resonance when he speaks about early development. Giddens harkens Marxist thought, that conformity takes place in the early stages, but Giddens goes on to say that this is necessary in order to develop an active free will. It is only after exposure to knowledge individuals can begin to critically evaluate their options.

In applying a constructivist approach to international students' identity shifts, this assumes that as the students obtain more knowledge they are constantly evaluating, and accepting or rejecting identity adornments. Such is the situation when one is in the midst of a foreign country. Foreign students sift through disjointed cultural remnants of information, which have no immediate bearing on them, looking for the desirable traits in which to help them acclimate. When people have no basis to understand the flood of new knowledge, this means the changes that are observable in their identity would theoretically be more of a sketch work of mix-matched cultural traits. This is to say that, there is no formulas for understanding, which attributes are selected, as they were acquired through the students own active free will. However, if trends emerge, that would suggest that there was something that the students had in common that lead them to select similar traits, that unknown variable lies at the heart of the research problem.

2.10 Theoretical Discussion Summation

Much discursive discussion and exploration has take place on the topic of identity over the last thirty years, differentiated by contrasting paradigms that all attempt to answer questions of identity formation. Marxist and Neo-Marxists presume capitalism both requires and relies on conformity. Modernist such as Anthony Giddens, Interactionalists such as Pierre Bourdieu, and post-colonialists such as Homi Bhabha, among others, have all offered their perspectives about the formation and degree of reflexivity of identity. While much of the prevalent theories available are overlapping, each takes a different stance about where identity originates and how it develops. Giddens suggest identity is formed through a series of ironic human inventions that operate in structures, which are constantly augmented, as more knowledge is acquired (1991). Internationalists, relies heavily on symbolism, yet takes on pragmatic approach to explain links between time and space, but stresses identity is more organic and

spontaneous than suggested in other paradigms (Bourdieu, 1977). Then there are the post-colonialist that stress ‘difference’ as a mechanism which leads to the repression of inhibition of natural identity development (Bhabha, 1996). Finally, there are the postmodernist, which alludes to end of days of sorts, the end of history, leading to an entirely new era that no longer harkens the society of old. Technology leads, and society follows. Table B illustrates the main theorists that have been explored in Part I, it is intended to highlight the main elements of each theorist analysis of identity.

Table B: Review of Theorist and Theories

	Marx	Habermas	Giddens	Bourdieu	Goffman
Frame of Analysis	Hierarchy/ Group	Society/ Groups	Agency/ Individual	Individual/ Society	Individual / Society
Main Concepts	Conformity, Communal Goals	Communication, Public Sphere	Social Learning, Knowledge, Interdependency	Time/ Space, Unorchestrtrion Habitual Social Rhythm	Discrepancy between actual identity and social identity
Threats	Capitalism, Conflict, Survival of the Fittest Individualism	Capitalism, Comodification Media	No Control of: Time/ Space/ Place/ Body/ Family	Complacent Conformity Habitus	Double Hermeneutic Effect
Model of Action	Division of Labor Uprising of Suppressed	Instrumental Action	Knowledge of Structure	Knowing the Rules and adapting to them	Self-awareness Impression Management

Based on the vastness of the theories available that offer explanations as to how identity is formed, it was difficult to underpin a single theory in which to solely direct the course of this study. Thus the researcher has taken elements from several theories but primarily focused on Giddens’ Structuration theory. This theory proposes that identity development is passive in the early stages of life, but as agents (people) become familiar with the inter-working of their structure (society), they become more proficient at exploiting their strengths to gain mastery over their own destinies. The researcher also looked to Goffman who suggests that humans are cleaver enough to replicate behaviours that they believe have value.

However, the researcher takes a more conservative stance when it comes to the connection between environment and social development. It is believed that family stability, cultural orientation, life experiences, local customs, access to knowledge, and having basic needs fulfilled, are extremely influential variables on identity, and will follow individuals through their lives, even if only on a subconscious level. This is a departure from the theories of Giddens, Bourdieu and Goffman, who acknowledge the influence these variables, downplay potency.

As suggested by developmentalists, core values are nurtured early in life and do subconsciously shape humans' designations about what is deemed desirable and what is considered despicable. However, in a global society, these values are becoming less genuine, as they are often mediated through a global cultural lens. This notion is more akin to postmodernism, and echoed by Friedman, Featherstone, and to some degree Tomlison, and Foster. Tomlison and Bhabha are often considered postcolonialist. The postcolonialist frame cautions the potential dangers of Western culture when imposed on rural and indigenous people in terms of degradation of their quality of life.

The researcher believes identity, if deconstructed to a basic framework, is composed of several basic elements; first, accountability, it can be religious, pragmatic or otherwise, but the formation of identity at its core requires being accountable to someone or some standard. This is believed to influence every decision of everyday. Secondly, from what vantage point do we view the world, and how far can we see, this determines individuals' world and their reality. Thirdly, what is the origin of our values, who or what has the greatest influence on our preferences. These three areas, which have been explored in this chapter thus far, will be further investigated throughout this thesis.

The researcher suspects that quite a lot can be learned about people by asking these types of questions and it was presupposed that international students share similar orientation in terms of these questions, making them enigmas in modern society and therefore worthy of further inquiry.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the techniques employed as a means to collect and articulate the data will be reviewed. The researcher approached the data primarily quantitatively; however supplemental qualitative data was also exploited. There were practical reasons for this approach chiefly due to time and resource constraints. The methodological consideration involved with this decision will be discussed in detail in section 3.1 1. A known consequence of a quantitative design is that the data derived is narrow in scope. Quantitative instruments can be useful tools for collecting frequency data from large samples to answer the “what” questions, but less adapt to explain “why”. Taking this into consideration, the researcher opted to include several open-ended qualitative questions in an attempt to gain more detailed insight in which to attempt to gather explanatory data. The synthesis of these two methods created an opportunity to increase the integrity of the study because the participants experiences was documented through two complimentary methodological frameworks. The triangulation of methods allowed the researcher to more accurately evaluate the outcomes because each data set served as a checks and balance system, substantiating or refuting its counterpart.

This chapter opens with further about discussion of the rationale for the incorporation of these methods and the thought that went into its design. In the sections to follow, the chapter will transition into an analysis the perceived benefits of each aspect of the approach as they were originally envisioned. Certain weaknesses became apparent during the administration of the design as the realities of social science fieldwork set in which will be discussed. One of the strengths of the design of this research was that it lent itself well to subtle reorganization in response to unforeseen challenges without dismantling the mechanisms already in place. This analysis will be followed by a presentation of the research setting, questionnaire design, sampling technique, the data collection and analysis processes. Towards the end of the

chapter a discussion of the ethical considerations which were put into effect, including the confidentiality guarantee the participants' received as mandated by the *Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste* (NSD) will be highlighted. Finally, the chapter will close with a description of the scope and limitations of the study.

3.2 Methodological Considerations

When students arrive in a host country there are several phases of identity development that in many cases leads to an altered identity (Dolby, 2004). In studies conducted by Dolby and others, it was discovered that students' first hand experiences abroad forced them to view their own life out of context, causing them to re-evaluate how they define themselves. This study does not attempt to underpin cause and affect relationships, but rather to identify common background and experiences in order to view how this affects values and preferences.

The researcher settled on a quantitative design with several qualitative questions in order to triangulate the data. The approach was selected because time was of the essence in light of the realization that there would only be a narrow margin of opportunity in which to obtain official clearance from universities and program administrators, make contact with the participants, also to administer and process the surveys. It was decided that the most realistic method of collecting data from a large sample group employing a staff of one, would be to rely on a comprehensive self-completion questionnaire.

The survey consisted of mainly multiple-choice closed questions, but key questions were asked in the form of open-ended short essay questions. In order to directly address the research questions the survey focused on several main aspects including; classifying the participants' family history, the participants' feelings about their home country in terms of political, social, and education system. The participants were then asked to compare and contrast their home and host countries. It is believed that these variables will prove to be theoretically relevant features. These attributes may summon subtle cultural manipulation

from the host country, coupled with exposure to other international students real transformation may occur. The researcher was also interested in uncovering the role of the program facilitators in influencing the degree of integration the students experienced. It became clear during the data collection phase that without the open-ended qualitative questions, making determinations as to the origin of the participants' responses in the quantitative section of the survey would have been exceedingly difficult. Indeed the essays provided the substance, which aided greatly in the final analysis.

3.2.1 Quantitative Methodology

The quantitative measure of data collection was done through a comprehensive multiple-choice questionnaire. Nominal variables were translated into numeric values and tracked for the purpose of identifying trends, frequencies, averages, and correlations.

Traditionally, for research to be scientifically useful it must be measured empirically, this is seen as important in terms of the study's replicability when applied in another setting. An empirical design although more scientifically viable, was rejected, because the subject matter being analyzed is not stable. In social science, unlike natural sciences, humans are constantly adapting to their environment and therefore the way in which they react to a treatment is not consistent. The implication is that repetition of a particular treatment may produce a varied outcome even if the experiment was flawlessly executed (Bryman, 2004). As outside influences are unpreventable, it is important to take into account contextual deviations and look at all possible explanations for a phenomenon in order to avoid drawing conclusions based on incorrect correlations. Therefore, the researcher deemed it necessary to rely on the quantitative portion of the survey to establish a skeleton analysis, which was later patched in with data derived from the qualitative questions to form a complete response to the research questions.

One of the greatest indemnities faced by researchers in conducting quantitative research within the field of social science was avoiding misinterpretation of the participants' responses. For this reason the researcher thought it necessary to encourage the participants to alert her to any questions that missed the mark or were confusing. Most of the students reported having no trouble understanding the questions, so it can be assumed that the instrument was reliable in terms of construct validity. Those students that confessed they did not understand the question were not included in the measurement of that particular question.

A weakness endemic to qualitative research is a limited scope of discovery, which was a challenge that plagued this research project unfortunately. Certain questions were crystal clear when viewed individually, but statistically stubborn and convoluted when viewed as a group. However, other question lent themselves well to being measured, easily producing conclusive outcomes that were significant when viewed individually or as a group. The questions that produced the most reliable results became the basis for the final analysis.

3.2 2 Reliability and Validity of Instrument and Outcomes

The instrument itself, is believed is highly reliable in terms of the background questions as it compares to this sample. In other words, past experience is a stable subject that will not change. If the same sample was to be re-administered, it is possible that questions related to how they remember the experience may change particularly in terms of severity. Due to the fact that time has past, perhaps things that were very negative at the time, no longer bother them, likewise perhaps things that were very exciting at the time, may have lost their appeal in light of new experiences they may have had since then.

If a new sample was to be assembled, different generalizability problems could be raised. The main construct validity complication is based on the frame in which the participants define ambiguous concepts such as 'multicultural'. Although a definition of terms was included with the survey, students from New York City will certainly understand multicultural differently that a student from Oslo. Thus these measures cannot be entirely valid unless it can be assured

that all member of the sample understand imprecise language in the same way, which is perhaps not ever possible.

If the study were to be replicated it is expected that outcomes would be reflective of these results, but would vary depending on the make-up of the group, and the amount of time that had past since the students had studied abroad. It is believed age, location of study, home country, relative international experience, and which program sponsored the students are influential to the way in which they answered the questions.

The outcomes generated from Group C and D are believed will produces reliable outcomes due to the fact that these groups share a similar background, as they are all Norwegian. When studying identity, local culture plays a crucial role in the interpretation and the understanding of foreign culture. Thus it is presumed that these groups' responses to study abroad will be similar due to commonalities in their background. Additionally the male/ female ratio is relatively representative of the population.

Groups A and B are extremely mixed, thus it is predicted that outcomes generated from this group may be less reliable. Even though all but one member studied in Norway, their backgrounds are so divergent it is unlikely that they will approach the experience in the same fashion due to their varied background.

3.2 3 Qualitative Methodology

Although quantitative methodology was central in the design, in order to qualify the results derived from the quantitative section, the inclusion of qualitative questions was employed. Key questions were intended to give the participants an opportunity to express themselves in their own words in an attempt to avoid limiting the scope of discovery. The final questions attempted to encourage the participants reflect on their experience and make predictions on how the time they spent abroad would alter both their daily routine and their grand future

plans. If a drastic change occurred on one, or both of these fronts, this would suggest a redefinition of aspects of the participants' identity.

The consequence of the addition of qualitative data was that new and unforeseen variables were introduced, which sometimes complicated the analysis if the information given was vague or incomplete. For the most part, the additional information aided in the analysis by providing the missing pieces of the puzzle. This improved the overall effectiveness of the instrument. Placing the qualitative questions after the fixed-answer questions ensured the participants were well versed in the type of language and subject matter that was being sought. It is believed this led to more enlightening responses.

The strengths and the weaknesses affiliated with the qualitative section of the study were both a product of the inherent flexibility of design. The flexible nature of the qualitative questions was a strength because it was able to capture the sentimentality of several key informants, which brilliantly depicted the progression of their experience. Information that was gleaned from these participants was not evident in the quantitative section; this is because the researcher had not preconceived the concepts in order to pursue the line of questioning. In fact, the researcher would have been otherwise unaware of certain phenomena, if the participants had not volunteered the information.

The flexibility of qualitative section was also a weakness of the design in that questions were worded in such a way to not lead the responder in a specific direction. Allowing the participants to answer the question in several ways, in some cases produced fruitful information. However, other times, the responses were vague and the researcher was unsure of the context in which the participant was answering the question. Ideally, the researcher would have liked an opportunity to ask some follow-up questions of these participants. However, after consideration of the ethical plausibility of an additional inquiry, and the time it would take to execute, it was ultimately decided that time did not permit. Therefore overly vague responses would be excluded from the final analysis.

3.2 The Research Setting

The University was the broad setting in which the research took place, however more specifically; it was emotional space that exists in the balance international living and home life that created the context. The common thread that linked the participants together was that they were all college students with ties to Norway, either because they are Norwegian citizens or because they had studied in Norway sometime between 2003 and 2005. With the exception of one student whom was an American citizen that studied in Denmark. Norway was selected first and foremost, because the researcher was already a international student studying in Norway and therefore had access to both international and Norwegian students; secondly, Norway has a substantial percent of its' domestic student population studying abroad. Norway additionally, accepts a substantial number of international students each term. This combination of variables makes it an ideal model for exploration.

The rudimentary contextual commonality shared by all the participants included in the study was the 'University' setting, whether it be the relatively large research University which I shall refer to as "Metropolitan University" (MU), or the medium sized private economics University, which I shall refer to as "Business College" (BC) both located in a large city in Norway. The Norwegian members of the sample, studied abroad in one of several dozen international Universities, but called either MU or BC their home university. The international students attended either MU or BC and referred to one of these schools as their host school, and called another university abroad their home school. These students were instructed to answer question that asked about their host and host university experience.

In preparation for fieldwork, the researcher gained clearance from the NSD though an online application process, and acquisitioned the University's international program coordinators responsible for the specific exchange groups both in writing and in personal interviews where the specifics of the research project were discussed. As a result of the discussion with the international student coordinator in Norway, it was decide that the researcher would present her project to the international students at their introductory meeting held during the first week of their arrival in Norway. The Norwegian students would be contacted via email

because many of them were at the time abroad finishing up their term abroad, and it would be difficult and time consuming to contact each of them in person.

3.3 Sampling Strategies

After an analysis of the goals of the study in relation to the resources available, the researcher opted to use a cluster sampling technique to assemble her sample group. There are two methods of carrying out a cluster sample; one approach can be classified as a random sample, in that a systematic method of random selection is introduced to any given cluster thus reducing the sample by delineating a new unit of analysis. This extra step is done in an attempt to eliminate sampling bias. More often than not, researchers that use a cluster sampling technique, generally use a non-random approach (Sproul, 1988). There are practical reasons for this, such as; cluster sampling is employed when it is not possible to incorporate a representative sample due to the immensity of the population, or in the case of unmanageable geographic dispersal (Babbie, 1992). In this study, it was a combination of these factors mentioned above that led the researcher to make use of the non-random cluster sampling strategy.

Gaining the participation of the students to form the would-be sample groups was a delicate task involving persistency and patience on the part of the researcher. There was a danger that during the time laps between the initial introduction of the research to the candidates, and the time when the survey was actually administered, that the sample groups' attention would wane. Therefore the researcher had to maintain vigilant contact with research volunteers, constantly reinforcing the urgency of the study. The delay, while an indemnity responsible for the loss of segments of the original international student sample was unavoidable, for three reasons; first, the researcher had been unable to finalize details about the inclusion of the Norwegian students, as meetings were still being arranged with the ERASMUS program coordinator responsible for Norwegian students abroad. Second; assuming that the Norwegian sample group would eventually be included, it was unclear if the Norwegian sample group was going to be big enough to stand on its own, or if it would need to be integrated into the already established international group. Third; it was too soon to begin surveying the international group, as many of the candidates had arrived in Norway just a week before and

had not even had time to get settled, thus they were not adequately prepared to answer the questions.

The method was random in that the researcher did not acquisition individual candidates, but rather addressed the entire population and asked for volunteers. This meant that whoever happened to complete the survey was included in the sample, and no qualified volunteer was excluded. Because no controls were built-in to randomize the selection process this technique still qualifies as a non-random method. Once the initial participation roster was created, from there, the sampling technique evolved into a snowball sample as participants informed the researcher of other eligible candidates that were later introduced into the final sample groups. A truly representative sample would have pooled from more than two Norwegian Universities, and attained larger numbers from the international institutions represented, however much more time and funding would be required for such a venture.

A pervasive challenge when working with international students is locating them, the international group that studied in Norway was relatively easy to make contact with, because they were all in the same place at the same time as the researcher. The Norwegian group was in any number of places during the fieldwork phase making it more difficult to locate them. Email constituted the sole dependant link to these participants. It was believed because of these constraints that the Norwegians students composed a smaller sample group than that of the international students in Norway.

These types of challenges illustrate another pertinent rationale as to why a cluster sample was advantageous; because in social science research, participant's free will interferes with the researcher's ability to control the size and quality of the sample. In other words, while a randomized sampling technique produces more statistically reliable results, it is not immune to infallibility as it may be ethically questionable depending on the type of compensation awarded for their participation. In this study, the participants' motivation to contribute had to be primarily altruistic because they received little compensation. Two thank you gifts were awarded, each worth about four hundred kroner, but the odds of winning was only two in

ninety-two, and therefore it seems safe to say the students participated out of goodwill rather than desire to win a prize.

3.3 1 Sample Organization and Size

Stratification of the cluster sample was incorporated to refine the sample by organizing the total sample into characteristically specific sub-groups. The primary pool in which the samples was drawn from was the ERASMUS exchange program. As the ERASMUS program is the largest student mobility organizer in Europe, it was presumed its users would offer the most representative accounts about the experience from a European perspective. The total sample group was split into two main factions, which would later split again to form four groups. The two main groups were Group A and Group C. These groups were all ERASMUS students. Group A was the international group that studied in Norway. Group C the Norwegian students that studied abroad. Groups B and D were subgroups of Groups A and C, but were not sponsored by ERASMUS.

The ERASMUS program is limited to European students and organizes exchanges between European Community members. The ERASMUS Link program serves the same function but is limited to bilateral exchanges for Scandinavians within other Scandinavian countries. The ERASMUS MUNDES program which is an extension of the ERASMUS program is designed to assist graduate students from developing countries to study in Europe, however students from developed countries worldwide may also apply, but preference is given to students from developing countries. Adding the ERASMUS MUNDES program increased the number of countries represented dramatically, and also increased the mean maturity level of the sample. Sample members that participated any of the above programs will be referred to under the umbrella term ERASMUS.

These ninety-two surveys were collected and categorically filed into the appropriate sub-group A, B, C or D, based on which program they participated in, relevant to where they studied. The total number of students that composed Group A was forty-eight members,

Group B had eight, Group C had twenty-nine, and Group D was the smallest with seven members.

3.3 2 Sample Details

Students from 24 different countries composed Groups A and B, all of who studied in Norway. Groups C and D, were composed of Norwegian students, whom reported on their experience in one of 15 different countries. All of the participants had a direct connection to Norway, except one participant from Group B whom, as mentioned earlier, studied in Denmark. Norway was in a sense, the control and the treatment in this study. In terms of Groups C and D, it was the control, but in terms of Groups A and B, it was the treatment. Consequently Group C and D, consisting of 39 percent of the total sample population, relied on the experiences of growing up in Norwegian society as a point of reference when comparing and rationalizing their experiences abroad. Just as Groups A and B, likewise approached the experience to studying in Norway relying on their pre-knowledge gained from growing up in one of twenty-four countries represented.

73 percent of the total sample was female. Even when analyzed in individual sub-groups, females still made up a clear majority (See Table C). It can be assumed that this marginally higher representation of females will affect the outcome of the study, but it is consistent with other research that shows that currently females are more likely to study abroad than males, in fact current figure suggest a 2 to 1 ratio of women versus men among international students (Davidson, 1998). The higher representation of females in the Group A was due impart to the sloppy handwriting on the information card by many of the male candidates which made contacting them impossible, this was an unforeseen sampling error in the recruiting process. Luckily, the problem was not replicated in the recruitment of the Norwegian sample groups, as they were contacted solely by email. This explains the higher male representation in the Groups C and D.

The age range was most strongly concentrated between the ages of twenty-two to twenty-four years-olds; however the number of students slightly older or slightly younger was almost perfectly balanced with 22 percent in the eighteen to twenty-one year old range, as well as another 22 percent in the twenty-five to twenty-nine range. 94 percent of the total sample was between eighteen and twenty-nine, the other five percent was thirty or older.

Table C illustrates the representation of females and males in real numbers, as well as the percentage of females within each subgroup. Also in this table is the number of participants in each subgroup as well as the percentage of the total sample each subgroup represents. Table D illustrates the age groups represented in this study on the X axis and on the Y axis are the subgroup classifications.

Table C: Female to Male Ratio of Sample

	Number Of Females	Number Of Males	Percent Of Females	Total Number of Respondents	Percent of Sample
Group A	37	11	75 %	48	52 %
Group B	6	2	75 %	8	9 %
Group C	19	10	66 %	29	31.5%
Group D	5	2	71 %	7	7.5%
Total	67	25	73 %	92	100 %

Table D: Age Distribution of Sample

	18-21 years		22-24 years		25-29 years		30+ years	
	Number Of People	Percent Of Group	Number Of People	Percent Of Group	Number Of People	Percent Of Group	Number Of People	Percent Of Group
Group A	15	31%	25	52%	7	15%	1	2%
Group B	4	57%	2	29%	1	0	1	14%
Group C	2	7%	13	45%	13	45%	1	3%
Group D	0	0	5	71%	0	0	2	29%
Total	21	23%	45	49%	21	23%	5	5%

On average the students had completed three years of college at the time they studied abroad, although the students' degree of college experience varied greatly from reporting to be in their first year of college to their ninth year of university study. 48 percent of the students' term abroad lasted six months, which was the most common time frame. A marginally high 31 percent of students spent a year abroad. Only seven percent of the students studied abroad two years and of these, most were graduate students. 14 percent were did not fall into any of the above categories, of those most of those participated in programs that lasted less than six month. Others reported having been in the country a substantial amount of time prior to beginning their studies.

The participants represented a wide range of academic disciplines, but the most recurrent field of study were focused in the Social Science, Political Science, and the Education faculties. According to Institute of International Education (IIE), which collects statistics about international student activity, shows that the faculty that has been the leading exporter of international students is Business. Humanities and Social Science faculties have steadily increased over time and were statistically the strongest around the millennium. However the tides are changing, since the late 1990s steady growth has continued in the Business disciplines and Engineering has become increasingly prominent. 2005 statistics indicate that Business and Engineering are the most popular courses of study among international students that studied in the United States (IIE Statistics, 2006).

Within Europe, among ERASMUS students, Social Sciences, Languages, and Philological Sciences still compose significant percentages of its international student population. As Europe's student population id composed of more females than males, it also makes sense when considering that females traditions are attracted to these subjects. However, Business has recently overtaken the Humanistic fields as the most popular subject. Engineering has also risen above Social Science beginning in the 2002/2002 school-year (European Commission, 2005). Europe has experienced steady growth in almost all majors and in total volume. However in the US, steady growth spiked during the 2002/2003 school year. Since then there was been a slight decline in student international mobility in and out of the United States. According to the European Commission Statistic, the sample procured in this study was not

an accurate reflection of the distribution of main focus of studies among European International students as whole. Table E illustrates the participants' main academic subject or focus of their classes while abroad.

Table E: Subject Distribution of Sample

	Frequency	Percent
Social Science	21	24 %
Education	12	14 %
Political Science	12	14 %
Law	10	11 %
Medicine	8	9 %
Art	6	7 %
Science/ Technology	6	7 %
Business	4	4 %
Literature	4	4 %
Languages	3	3 %
Psychology	3	3 %
Other	3	3 %
Total	92	100 %

3.4 Questionnaire Design

A total of four different questionnaires were used to study the same variables. Each participant responded to just one survey which best addressed their situation. The first two questionnaires were almost identical; the only variance had to do with the ERASMUS program. One survey included questions specifically about the ERASMUS program; the other was more general, intended for non-ERASMUS students. These two surveys were issued to international students that studied in Norway. The other two surveys were designed for Norwegian Students that studied abroad, the first, specifically for ERASMUS students, and the second for non-ERASMUS students. Each of the questionnaires had between thirty-five and thirty-eight questions, five of which were essay questions, the others were all multiple choice.

The reason why different surveys were required is that the surveys needed to be comparable, but there were circumstances that prevented this. Due to the fact that one sample group was answering the questions in terms of Norway, and the other group was answering the questions in term of another nation-state, meant that certain assumptions suitable for one survey group

would not be applicable for the other. To avoid confusion, the surveys were augmented accordingly.

Designing the questionnaires was a process. The first drafts of these questionnaires were pilot tested among several different individuals, each from different cultures with varying degrees of English literacy. These volunteers were asked to pay special attention to the wording of the question and identify any unclear language or general ambiguity within the questions. This exercise proved to be very enlightening and helpful in preparing the final drafts of the survey. Several drafts were tested, and after each test, adjustments were made, until the survey was sufficiently streamlined.

In this study, the greatest danger was that the wide variety of participants would attach different meanings and significance to elusive descriptive words like: *political involvement*, *ethnic majority* and *cultural minorities*. In consideration of this, the researcher included a section called *Definition of Terms* attached to the survey, which attempted to define any ambiguous vocabulary used in the survey (See Appendix 26). It was learned that even though the list contained nineteen definitions, in a survey that contained less than forty questions, which were thoroughly pilot tested, there was still some participants that reported to be unsure of the meaning or context of certain words.

Several changes were made to the survey after the first groups' surveys were returned before the proceeding groups surveys were sent out. This action was triggered by the comments received from the first group when asked to evaluate the survey design. It was brought to the researcher's attention that two words were ambiguous. These words were "nationalist" and "freedom." The word "nationalist" was used to describe the opposite of a "cosmopolitan" which generated discontent from some students. This early observation prompted the researcher to change the wording of the other surveys, posing same question using other words, as it became obvious the word 'nationalist' was too polarizing and would interfere with the results. The word 'freedom' remained in the survey, because in the first round of surveying, this word presented no particular problem. However when the Norwegian surveys

were analyzed, it became apparent that when asked to rank the importance of *freedom* against other aspects of human life, it seemed to hang stubbornly in the middle, whereas it ranked either very high or very low in the international survey. After a consultation with several Norwegians as to what a possible explanation could be, it was suggested that the word ‘freedom’ out of context was not a clear variable in which to rank. Other explanations arose as well, but could not be further pursued with this instrument.

The researcher was prepared for the possibility that some of the content that was sought in the study would require gaining sensitive or personal information that the participants may be unwilling to divulge. Out of 92 surveys, no participants flat out refused to answer a question. It appeared that any empty cells were due to the participants accidentally skipping over a question, which was predicted to have been caused by an inconsistency in the format generated through the electronic transfer of the document. To ensure this was the case, the researcher explicitly asked the participants to mark an “X” on any question that they for any reason chose not to answer; this was so that she could interpret if the act of skipping a question it was intentional.

The opportunity was also given to the participants to place an asterisk next to their answer if they felt that more explanation was needed to properly answer the question. Several of the participants took advantage of this option and did so because the fixed answers provided were not sufficient to explain their situation. Their comments allowed the researcher to better evaluate their survey and proved to be a helpful interpretive tool.

One variable not included as one of the multiple choice possibilities having to do with a question which asked about aspects of studying abroad that were most troublesome to the participants was “loneliness”. This explanation was overlooked by the researcher, but focused on by several of the participants in their comments. This variable could not be measured because the option was not listed on any of the surveys, but it did surface in the qualitative essays and as a write-in answer in the multiple-choice section. The above example describes a dilemma that arose with this survey design. The benefit to allowing the participants to write-in

a answer was that new information was uncovered, but that which was learned, could not be demonstrated scientifically because the option “loneliness” was not made available everyone. Perhaps it was actually a major route cause for discontent while abroad but it cannot be proved with this instrument.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

All data was collected during the months of September and October 2005. Group A had completed their first month of studies at either MU or BC at the time they were surveyed. Group B’s status varied, some of the participants had already completed their term abroad and returned home, others, were still in the midst of their term in Norway when they were surveyed. Group C and D had all completed their programs abroad at the time they completed their survey. It did not appear that these differences in the timeline of the survey administration impacted the study much, other than that the fact that students that had already completed their program were able to give more concrete answers.

All but four participants completed their survey online. The four that opted not to take the survey online sighted issues with internet access or downloading difficulties which were addressed by offering these candidates the alternative of completing a hard copy and mailing it to the researcher which they did.

Groups A and B received their surveys first, this was due to a delay that affected Groups C and D related to a administrative changing of the guard, which meant a new coordinator was brought in to fill the vacated position, thus gaining access to this vital liaison required some patients until the new coordinator was in place. It was decided that it was prudent to go ahead with the surveying of Group A as the researcher was concerned that if too much time lapsed between the initial introduction and the administration of the survey it might result in a lower response rate. Groups C and D’s surveys went out approximately one month after Groups A and B. While this was a deviation from the original schedule, it proved to be less confusing when the surveys began to come in. The time skewing prevented periods of overwhelming returns, which could have increased the opportunity for careless filing mistakes. The second

benefit of having a dual surveying period meant that problems encountered during the first phase were intercepted and overridden before round two.

The most major problem were of a technological nature, apparently an automatic virus alert become connected to the survey file when transmitted to certain internet accounts, preventing these participants from opening the file containing the survey. The participants affected by this problem were re-sent the survey in a different format, or to an alternate email account, or were given the option of receiving a hard copy as a solution. A less pervasive but no less frustrating problem was that some participants were confused about how to deliver the survey, thus an additional attachment was created that offered step-by-step instructions explaining the delivery process in more detail. These and other slight changes made the second phase of surveying much smoother.

3.6 Data Recording and Analysis

Once all the surveys were collected, the quantitative questions were coded and imputed into a spreadsheet, which was later imported into the statistical analysis program; Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Some of the questioned were reordered for the purpose of sorting the questions thematically for easy review by the researcher. The qualitative questions were tallied and categorised based on similar responses and combined with biographical data, which was integrated into discussions in the analysis chapter. Particularly insightful comments were exploited as tools for interpreting and articulating meaning into the analysis of the quantitative section, just as the evidence derived in the quantitative section was incorporated into discussions of the qualitative analysis.

All of the surveys were printed out, given an identification number and organized numerically based on when they were received and kept close at hand for quick referencing. Backups of the hard copies were stored on the researcher's private computer. The data was cleaned; this was done through a series of random checks of the various questions. If an answer recorded in the spreadsheet did not match the hard copy the entire survey was re-entered.

The cleaning process illuminated the discovery of minor errors in the survey itself. One problem was that the surveys administered to groups B and D had two additional options on one of the multiple-choice fixed answers. Remarkably, none of the participants selected either of these additional options, so no decisions needed to be made about how to deal with the computation of the extra variables. Another discovery was a wording disagreement involving the same groups. In this case the wording of a question given to one survey group was exactly opposite that given to the others, meaning that a “yes” response on one set of surveys equalled a “no” response on the other surveys. This mistake was attributed to researcher accidentally sending out an earlier edition of the survey, in the final draft the question wording was flip-flopped. This discrepancy was caught before the data had been entered so that the researcher was able to adjust the responses so that the correct statistical measure could be calculated.

In terms of the analysis, the entire population of international students is difficult to estimate because of different reporting methods within each country, however since this thesis focused primarily was primarily composed of ERASMUS students, the ERASMUS website reports 135,388 students studied abroad in the 2003-2004 school-year (European Commission, 2005). MU accepted roughly five hundred international students in the fall of 2005, of which forty-eight were surveyed. Similarly roughly five hundred students from MU studied abroad in the spring of 2005, of which thirty-six were surveyed. Fifteen other students were included that were not involved with ERASMUS, but were representative of the greater international student population.

There are two units of analysis focused on in this study, the individual and the subgroups. The researcher was initially concerned with identity transformation on an individual level, however the major finding of the Norwegian groups C and D, were also evaluated as a whole, as were the International groups A and B. These groups were compared in the final analysis in order to gain a better perspective about the relevance of the differences.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Some of the ambiguities about specific segments of the sample groups in this study were byproducts of upholding high ethical standards. The researcher took great care, out of respect for her volunteers, and the integrity of the project to maintain the anonymity of the participants. Several minor ethical dilemmas arose that threatened to undermine this goal, beginning in the sample procurement phase.

The challenge was to create a systematic method of organization of the participants' contact information in a way that prevented an obvious, directly traceable link to individual's identity. The solution was that the participants were to make-up a fictitious name of their choosing, which would serve as their code name until their survey was coded numerically. This fictitious name was how the researcher would address the participants in all correspondence. The problem was email was the main artery in which the information flowed between the researcher and the participants, and many of the participants' email addresses contained their name. Therefore, their identity could not be entirely concealed. Not to mention, a motivated hacker can easily infiltrate that email, as a secure web connection could not be guaranteed. After some informal risk analysis, the researcher determined that as long as the participants were cognisant of the risk of email transmissions being intercepted, possibly revealing the participant's identity, it was decidedly still the most effective mode of communication. The participants email information was disposed of once contact was no longer necessary.

The second dilemma was brought to the attention of the researcher by the NSD, which expressed concern about how easy it might be to link the survey data to individuals. By simply combining several of the identifying biographical details and comparing them against the number of student coming from a particular country, a persons' identity might be uncovered. In the case of this sample group, that would be possible as there were participants that were the sole representative of their country. According to the NSD these individuals

needed to be disguised, their recommendation was to group these participants into larger groups to conceal their identity. This idea was ultimately rejected on the basis that the unique character of these nations with only a few participants might have been overlooked if put in a combination group or it might have produced ineffectual outputs if incongruent nations were combined. For example, there were a particularly small number of participants from Asia. The researcher decided against lumping all Asians into one group due to the fact that there is quite a lot of difference between China and Indonesia. Grouping these two countries together could lead to an assumption that may be true of one country, but not applicable to the other. If filed under the same umbrella label; this distinction will be buried. It was decided after a meeting with the researcher's thesis adviser that the NSD's recommendation would negate one of the goals of the study, which was to investigate how cultural background affects students' perception of their experience abroad. The researcher responded by grouping the variables creatively and by not including information that was not pertinent to a particular discussion, thus making tracing individuals more difficult.

An unrelated challenge that also had ethical consequences was the dilemma of how to approach essays in the qualitative section that were unclear. As mentioned earlier, it was determined that there was not enough time to go back and contact each participant that returned an ambiguous comment in their essay. To avoid misrepresentation; confusing comments were disregarded in the final analysis. The unfortunate fallout of this decision was that the voices of those most fluent in English were heard, while a higher percentage of students from countries typically less fluent in English were silenced. Another similarity among Western society is that it openly advocates the evaluations of services, education and life itself. This is something less socially acceptable in other parts of the world.

3.8 Limitations

In a project involving almost 100 students from a variety of backgrounds, varying levels of education and unequal English proficiency, not to mention uneven level of motivation to participate, the study was subject a number of limitations. The researcher was well aware that an in-depth analysis would be impossible based on limited resources and the short timeframe

allotted for fieldwork. The method of communication did not allow for any face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the participants. This meant that the students' ability to articulate their thoughts clearly was central to the interpretation of their experience. In some cases this posed a particular problem, however surprisingly it also translated into unforeseen benefits. It forced the students to offer additional details in order to explain their position thoroughly which opened the door to further discussion of aspects of the topics the researcher had not previously considered. Another benefit of this communication method was that it was less demanding on the participants, as they could contribute to the study when they had time. It is believed that this meant an increased number of students were willing to participate.

There was no attempt made to balance the demographics of the sample. Once the sampling technique transformed into a snowball method, the groups became even less demographically balanced. The sample evolved into an organic composition, as participants referred friends and other candidates were included. It was decided early on that having the largest sample possible would increase the reliability of the sample more than sticking to a regimented representative sample. As a result, the sample underrepresented both males and students in the technology and mathematics faculties despite attempts to gain participation from this demographic.

A second limitation was the inability of the researcher to predetermine an identity baseline of the participants. It is not possible to state definitively what aspects of the international study experience were actually tied directly to studying abroad. Therefore this study does not attempt to specially identify exact outcomes. What this study can do is to paint a verbal portrait of the typical international students and describe normatively possible transforming events that may have led to the augmentation of identity. The study also attempts to identify trends within sub-groups, and look at the role the program administration has on the degree of integration and students experienced.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this the fourth chapter, the discoveries that unfolded during this study will be revealed and critically evaluated. A survey, which utilized a dual methodological approach, was employed to elucidate information that would support or refute the research statement and answer the research questions. The first approach called for fix-answer quantitative responses, the second included several open-ended qualitative essay questions. The triangulation of these methods worked in a vis-à-vis relationship by allowing the two contrasting data sets to be integrated into one analysis. The sequential organization of the biographical questions first, provided the necessary background details, which became important in the interpretation of the qualitative essays. Likewise, the essay questions reinforced selected quantitative fixed-answer responses, leading to increased clarity in the analysis phase. A symbiotic relationship also existed between the questions themselves. It was predicted that certain questions would generate similar responses thus validating the reliability of the sample. This prediction turned out to be generally true, however, when exceptions were identified, opportunities for learning were isolated and perused whenever possible.

This chapter, like Chapter Two, is divided into parts; the first part shall focus on the quantitative evidence. By utilizing the data derived from the multiple-choice section of the questionnaire the section will rely heavily on statistical analysis. In the second part, the qualitative open-ended essays will be introduced and discussed. In the concluding sections of this chapter, the derivative of the two methodological outputs will be integrated into an analysis of the findings, by comparing and contrasting variations in sample groups. These outcomes will be weighed against the results against previous research to determine if similar results were realized.

PART I

4.2 Quantitative Analysis

The data derived in this study was obtained through two contrasting methods of scientific examination, quantitative and qualitative. In this portion of the paper the researcher will present the quantitative outcomes and analysis. The rationale behind the incorporation of quantitative data went beyond the basic need for time and resources efficiency, it was also seen an effective means tracking and measuring specific details about the sample groups. Quantitative data is well-suited for establishing the existence of behaviours and attitudes in a way that can be easily organized and measured (Bryman, 2004). It is also useful for gathering large amounts of frequency and trend data, which can in turn be exploited to formulate basic assumptions about the sample. Quantitative measurements are is less effective at producing explanatory data. Determining how these outcomes may have come to fruition required reliance on other studies, as well as the qualitative analysis that will be introduced later in the chapter.

The application of various descriptive methods of measurement was integrated in an attempt to form the skeleton outline of the contemporary international student population based on this sample group. The quantitative analysis focused on three central themes; the participants' biographical information including pre-knowledge and background experiences, second, their regard for their home countries in contrast to their host countries, and third, the role of international exchange programs; as they influence students' ability and desire to integrate abroad. The combination of these topics will be feed into the final analysis that is seeking to construct a verbal portrait of international students in terms of their background, their development abroad, and the outcome of the experience as it affects their identity and life choices.

4.2.1 Family Background and Culture

Precedence has been set through the body of research that identifies a correlation between the highest level of education attained by ones' parents and the level of academic achievement of their children (Hahs-Vaugh (2004). In a related study it was revealed that beyond academic outcomes, first generation students' childhood experiences differs from students whom have parents with an advanced education. These differences led to disparities in the degree of social preparedness from one student to the next. This phenomenon translates into first-generation students being more reliant on peers and faculty to develop what is known as "social" and "cultural capital" (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak & Terenzini, 2004:278). Social capital refers to connections among individuals, such as networking and a sense of reciprocity between individuals (Putnum, 2002). Cultural capital is a term popularized by Pierre Bourdieu, which refers to knowledge, skill, or experiences that gives an individual a higher status among his or her peers (Bourdieu, 1977).

With these discoveries in mind, the researcher began her inquisition into the background of the international student sample by looking first, at the education level of the participants' parents, which appeared to be on par with the estimates of the greater domestic college student population. 52 percent of the participants reported that both of their parents attended a minimum of three years of college, 73 percent of fathers and 59 percent of mothers, had earned a degree or attended at least three years of college (See Appendix 1). What this measure established is that international students' family background is in line with the domestic population in terms of their parents' education level, which served as a baseline in which to start looking for divergence.

In the search for divergent characteristics specific to international students, the researcher sought to determine the degree of international exposure the students had prior to studying abroad. This was done by looking at the participant's immediate families' international mobility history, in the form of studies completed abroad, as well as other international residencies. The rationale behind this question was rooted in an assumption similar to that of the level of education attainment of the parents. It was thought that students whom had early

international exposure to other cultures would be more likely to be conscious and curious about other ways life and therefore inspired to pursue study abroad. This proposition was influenced by a combination of Marxist theory as well as developmentalist logic, which presupposes that society and culture at its most localised point would be the family. Thus if students were brought up to believe living internationally was normal thing to do, they would ingest this idea and later in life when an opportunity to study abroad presented itself, the student would have preconditioned to see it was desirable.

The findings were significant, as 47 percent of the sample reported they had a parent or sibling that either lived or studied abroad for more than six months (See Appendix 2). In many cases, more than one family member had lived abroad, a possible indicator that a sizable percentage of the sample had at least one, if not both, parents that were foreign-born. Another clue that gave this theory credence was the fact that the percentage of mothers versus fathers that had lived internationally, exhibited just 3 percent variance, a correlation that is unlikely coincidence (See Table F). Illustrated in Table F is the real number as well as the percentage of the sample that had father, mothers, and siblings that lived abroad and had not lived abroad.

Table F: Family Members Abroad

	Lived Abroad		Not Lived Abroad	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Fathers	28	30 %	64	70 %
Mothers	25	27 %	67	73 %
Siblings	32	35 %	60	65 %

Further analysis was carried out looking into the countries of origin of the participants as compared to their families' relevant international experience in order to see if any trends emerged, full details are available in Appendix 3. Immediately apparent was that Western countries composed the highest ratios of participants that reported having parents or siblings that had lived internationally. Representatives from Western countries on average showed

that more than half its participants had ‘internationalized’ families. Those countries with about a quarter and slightly above with internationalized families, also included mostly Western countries. Obtusely, those countries that exhibited a low percentage of participants with family members that had lived internationally were generally from Eastern European and Asian countries. Of the non-Western countries that were plotted on the ‘internationalized’ side of the scale, with the exception of Bulgaria, all were countries that had become independent relatively recently, easily within the lifetime of the participants’ parents. Countries such as Latvia, Slovakia and Serbia-Montenegro, these countries were previously unified under an occupying or alternate government configuration therefore international travel on the part of the parents may not have been a quest for knowledge or leisure, but due to migration related to the dissolution of the occupation or the redefinition of political borders. This type of mobility is entirely different in nature, but may still generate a similar effect among the second generation. Further examination would need to be done on this variable in order to make a precise diagnosis about how this type of influence might differ in effect in terms of the offspring’s quest for international education. It must be said that this question did not make the distinction between the reasons for the families’ international isolation or relocation; it just establishes what occurred (See Appendix 28: question no. 6A-6B).

A statistical trend as evidenced by the European Commission Statistics in its data concerning international students, collected seventeen years ago, indicated about half of the international student population studies abroad more than once (Maiworm, et. al, 1991). To test this proxy, the participants were asked about their past international experience to see if they reflected this trend. 35 percent reported that they had lived abroad before. This quotient was broken down further to reveal whether males or females within the sample had more international experience. The assumption being that, based on the general trend that more women study abroad than males, this would suggest that females would likely outnumber the males (See Table G). Illustrated in Table G is the real number as well as the percentage of the total sample that had previously lived or studied abroad for six months or more prior to being surveyed.

Table G: Samples' Previous International Experience

	Lived Abroad	
	Number of People	Percentage of Sample
Females	22	33 %
Males	10	38 %
Total	32	35 %

Surprisingly, within this sample, actually the males proved to have more international experience, with 38 percent of the males answering that they had studied or lived abroad before, compared to 33 percent of the females. A possible explanation for this specific to the Norwegian context is the requirement among Norwegian males to enrol in compulsory military service, which may have involved international travel. It is usual for Norwegian males to complete their service prior to college therefore males are often older than females students, meaning that they also may have had more opportunity to travel as well.

The combined statistics, while lower overall than in the previously mentioned study, were still surprisingly high based on the fact that 84 percent of the sample took part in the ERASMUS program, and an even larger proportion was European. This was curious because ERASMUS students generally are only allowed to participate in the program once, and ERASMUS is the main facilitator of international exchanges among Europeans. A possible explanation could be that these students did not study abroad multiple times, but rather worked abroad, or lived with a family member in their youth outside their home country, the latter being more probable due to the fact that this is a young sample, 72 percent was under the age of twenty-five, and were in their third year of college at the time they were surveyed. With this in mind, it seemed a remarkably high quantity of students that had lived internationally prior to the exchange discussed in this study. If the sample was composed of a wider representation of international exchange programs, and a more senior group of students, it is believed that the percentage of students that had lived abroad would have been even higher. It is also predicted that many of these first-time international students will study abroad in the future as indicated when asked if they planned to study abroad again. 51 percent of the participants answered they

would like to study abroad again, and an even higher percent had aspirations of returning to the same country for work or further study (See Appendix 4).

An inquiry was launched which attempted to gather critical evidence that would help construct a complete picture of the participants' multicultural influences that were experienced first hand prior to studying abroad. By examining the ethnic make-up of the participants' families, and how they fit into the greater ethnic demographic of their community. This was key in predicting how they would react abroad when the tables were turned, and they had become the foreigners. Within the total sample just 2 percent claimed to be a minority, while 98 percent proclaimed to be part of the ethnic majority or that no clear majority or minority was visible where they came from. These numbers corresponds with other studies, which suggests that in addition to minority participation in education continuing to remain low, participation in study abroad programs is even lower, despite measures to promote international education among minorities (Dolby, 2004). With such a large percentage of the students reporting to be of the ethnic majority in their home country, the researcher expected that the sample would not be prepared for any possible discrimination they might encounter abroad. That being said, it was also believed students that had never experienced discrimination, would be less keen at detecting it, unless it was extremely overt. This is why the 2 percent that claimed to be of a minority background were of particular interest to the study, as it was predicted that they would be more sensitive and affected by any possible discrimination they experienced abroad. However, being that the minority portion of the sample was so low, making any generalizations would be misleading. Also, half of the minority population had lived abroad before, meaning the experience described in their survey may have been less authentic due to established expectations.

It was thought that the participants' degree of confidence when interacting in a foreign society was partially rooted in their past experiences within their own community. To see what type of a community the participants came from was of interest, whether it be, a large city or rural area was thought to be of consequence to the socio-cultural development of the participants. Exploring the demographic details about the people that composed the participants' hometowns, along with the type of community they came from, offered a clearer picture of

the participants' background. The idea was to attempt to understand how much international exposure the participants had on a daily basis before going abroad. In this sample most of the students were from residential areas or towns, the rivalling group composed students from large cities, but few claimed to be from the fringe, metropolitan centres, or rural areas. The table below displays these two variables (See Table H). The Table below contains a matrix, which organizes the breakdown of the participants' definition of their home town environment, including the ethnic composition of their town as well as the relative size of their community.

Table H: Socio-Cultural Make-Up and Hometown Type

HOMETOWN TYPE	Multicultural		Prominent Minority Groups		Few Minorities		Homogeneous		Total	
	Number Of People	Percent Of Sample	Number Of People	Percent Of Sample	Number Of People	Percent Of Sample	Number Of People	Percent Of Sample	Number of People	Percent of Sample
Metropolitan Center	6	7%	4	4%	3	3%	0	0%	13	14%
Large City	8	9%	6	7%	12	13%	2	2%	28	31%
Town	6	7%	9	10%	17	19%	7	8%	40	44%
Rural Area	2	2%	3	3%	4	4%	2	2%	11	12%
Total	22	24%	22	24%	36	40%	11	12%	92	100%

It was observed that most of the students had at least some exposure to other cultures in varying degrees of saturation. Few participants claimed to be from homogeneous communities, however most reported to be from communities with few minorities. Considering that such a large percentage of the sample was Norwegian, it can be presumed that a reasonably high number grew-up outside of Oslo, which makes this a noteworthy distinction. While Oslo has emerged into a rather multicultural city, the rest of Norway has considerably fewer minorities. Overall, the sample did not seem to have a significant amount of opportunity for interaction with minorities prior to studying abroad. Even when the Norwegian participants were removed, and the sample re-measured, the percentages did not sway significantly. It was determined that the sample probably did not gain much knowledge about other cultures through daily exposure within their own communities. It was thought that their first-hand experience was probably gained through international travel.

Travel ranked in the median range in a question that asked the students to rate the most important aspects of their life (See Appendix 9). In addition, the fact that many of the participants had internationally experienced family members, suggested that the students had probably done some international travel, and were exposed to other cultures in which they may have based some of their assumptions about foreign culture in general.

It appeared that the majority of the students had positive expectations about how they would be received by the local population of their host countries. 65 percent of the population expected that they would be treated at least as well as the locals treat each other, if not better (See Appendix 5). Males proved to more confident that they would be received warmly; curiously, 48 percent of the males in the sample expected that precisely because they were foreign, they would receive special treatment. The females in the sample suggested only marginally lower expectations about the level of courtesy they expected, however, the female respondents' responses leans more heavily towards expectations of 'equal' treatment, rather than 'exceptional' treatment. Females also expressed a higher degree of reservations about their own ability to interact confidently with the local population, an insecurity that was less apparent among the male respondents (See Appendix 6). The most common response among females within this sample, totalling 44 percent, expected they would be treated in the same manor as the local treat each other. Only 17 percent expected they would receive special treatment. 26 percent stated they were uneasy about approaching locals for services or assistance. A slight 6 percent of the females admitted they feared that the locals would treat them with disrespect because they were foreign, a concern only 4 percent of the males admitted to. The remaining 7 percent of females and 8 percent of the males said their expectations varied depending on the circumstances of the interaction. The responses authored by females appeared to be underscored by their own self-confidence in terms of their language ability, their physical appearance, and their ability to conform to local customs. One female student presupposed her demeanour towards others set the tone of the conversations she had with locals. Males incongruently, seemed to focus more on the political environment and external situational factors independent of them personally in their determination of how they would be treated.

Some of the participants prefaced their responses by stating that they believed that the treatment they experienced was tied to that specific country they reported on. Suggesting their responses could not be generalized because of specific factors that created a certain social condition of that particular country. Therefore it seemed logical to look at the question not only in terms of gender differences, but also as a comparison between countries. An investigation into the distribution of the opinions was compiled and a chart devised as a means of comparison. The chart catalogued the gender of the participant, the country they studied in, and how the individuals characterized daily interaction with the local population (See Appendix 7). What was observed was that Spain, for example, stood out as being a country that the participants were skeptical about. All the participants reported feeling insecure about interacting with the locals in Spain. It must also be noted that no males from this sample studied in Spain, only female opinions were measured. Germany was generally well regarded in these terms by both males and female. Italy interestingly, received favourable predictions of kindness by the locals according to the male perspective, but the female participant expressed apprehension about interacting with Italians. Among those that studied in France, the opinions were split but not along gender lines. Some participants, both male and female were equally nervous about interacting with the locals, however others that studied in France, did not express any concerns at all.

Returning to the discussion of international student values, a topic, which was previously introduced in terms of travel, aided greatly in the construction of the international student portrait. In this question the participants were given a list of common aspects of daily life and asked to rank them from one to fifteen, one being most important, fifteen being least important. When the question was measured, the rankings were grouped into: the top three, which were considered to be the *most important*, the bottom three which were considered *not important*, and three medium ranks; known as *important*, *somewhat important*, and of *low importance*. In this way the measure seemed more accurate, because it is likely that some aspects of life were of equal importance to the participants.

Several cross tabulations indicated trends such as; the majority of the participants that ranked religion to be of little or no importance also ranked marriage as *not important* (See Appendix

8). Another discovery uncovered that *travel* correlated closely with *quality of life*, perhaps an indication that even if travel was not considered to be of primary importance to this sample, they saw act of travel as being akin to living well (See Appendix 9). Some perplexing discoveries were that education in terms of an “advanced degree” ranked highly among the majority of the participants, but educations in terms of “marketable skills” ranked considerably lower (See Appendix 10). The researcher was puzzled by this at first, but after further consideration, proposed that this non-correlation was not unfounded. In fact it seems plausible that these students presumably have not entered the work force, and still operated under the guise that as long as they have a degree the career of their dreams awaits them. Thus these students have not had the life experience to see the value in procuring non-academic skills. Other interesting observations were that attention to personal health ranked extremely high. The researcher zeroed in on the participants that were medical students to see if it was they that raised the accumulative score concerned with health. Among medical students, health ranked highly, however it was slightly more prolific among students that studied Social Science and Education (See Appendix 11). Across all demographics, family, friends, and freedom were seen as the three most treasured conventions of their daily life, followed by personal health and maintaining a certain quality of life of their own choosing. ‘A quality life’ according to the participants included having the luxury of free-time, as apposed to monetary opulence (See Appendix 12).

4.2 2 Contrasting Home and Host

Investigating the strength and sentimentality the participants felt for their homeland was an essential component used to predict the degree in which these individuals would allow themselves to emotionally invest in their host country. The participants were presented with a list varying levels of possible human responses one might feel related to national observances. A variable measured was anthems or popular songs linked to national culture. The participants were asked to define their feelings according to fixed responses. This question was paralleled with another that asked the participants to define the frequency in which they typically displayed symbols of their home country. They were also asked about their level of trust in their country’s government, compared to their host country. The information derived provided the background for one of the essays in the quantitative section, which asked

students to negotiate the duality of living in two different environments to determine where their allegiance lied. Mainly this discovery was used to determine whether the experience, had strengthened or weakened their connection to their home country. The background information was important because it reinforced the motivation that the essays were predicated on.

When asked about their feelings regarding national expressions of comradely, such as national songs, the opinions were distributed fairly evenly, ranging from “proud” to “indifferent”. Few students expressed feeling shame towards their home country when they heard national songs. When the sample was separated into the international students that studied in Norway (Groups A and B), versus the Norwegian students that studied abroad (Groups C and D), it became apparent that the Norwegian students were generally more positively inspired when they heard their anthem, than the students from the international group where more variance in culture, national history, and politics forged a wider distribution of responses (See Appendix 13). Other countries were not studied individually due to the low representation in the sample.

When asked how often the participants displayed symbols that represented their home country, the participants were very clear in there rejection of this practice. In fact 45 percent of the total sample proclaimed that they never display symbols associating themselves with their home country. Even when the sample was split into international versus Norwegian students, the percentages mirrored each other closely, with the international group proving to be slightly more opposed to the suggestion (See Appendix 14).

It was of interest to understand how the students viewed their government, this piece of information was believed would offer clues about their level of security they felt at home, which was believed would frame their experience abroad. The participants were also asked to evaluate how their home countries’ government measured up to their impressions of their host countries’ government. It was presupposed that those which were very confident in their home government, would be more critical of other countries way of conducting themselves;

and those that were more sceptical about their home government, would be less concerned by an alternate governing structure. The surveys showed that overall the sample trusted their home government *much* (See Appendix 15). 56 percent of the Norwegian participants had *Much Trust* in their government and another 39 percent stated they trusted their government almost completely. Only 9 percent of the international groups expressed having total trust in their government. However, 48 percent claimed that they had *much trust* in their home government, only slightly less trusting in their government than their Norwegian counterparts.

When asked to critically evaluate their home versus host countries, the participants were almost evenly split between a generally positive and generally negative rating of home versus host. The positive reviews of home slightly out-ranked those that felt the host country was generally better in terms of effectiveness, fairness, and bureaucracy management. 19 percent claimed that there was no difference between their home and host countries' style of government (See Appendix 16). Not surprisingly, the majority of these students studied in Norway and came from Canada, Denmark, and the Netherlands, which are indeed rather similar, as all three subscribe to a socialist model of governance similar to that of Norway. This measure lacked precision due to the fact that several of the participants gave more than one answer, some of which were contradictory, but it is still possible to get a general idea about how the students compared their home country to the country they studied in.

This variables being explored in the previous paragraph required a creative approach to the measurement of the outcomes. The reason for this was due to the multiple responses given by some students, and single responses by others. Looking at a standard frequency of the outcomes could not ensure scientific accuracy. It was decided that this question was not relevant on an empirical level, but there was still an opportunity to gain valuable insight despite the quantitative measurement dilemma. What was learned based on the general direction of the responses was that the sample became divided on national fronts as a result of this series of questions. Countries that subscribe to a stronger nationalistic model of governance seemed to produce respondents that were discomforted by the phenomenon which led them to become withdrawn from politics. The French and American participants were a prime example of this sort of sentiment.

A clear difference emerged between the Norwegian and Continental European participants versus the former Soviets in terms of their appreciation and pride in their country. The Norwegians and Continental European participants exhibited the most trust and appreciation their home government. On the opposite side of the spectrum, participants from former Soviet countries were the most skeptical of their government. Asian and American participants were plotted in the middle of the spectrum; these students could be described as having limited trust and marginal appreciation in their home government

It was presupposed that the feelings expressed by the participants about their home government set the tone for the manner in which they would receive their host government. It appeared that the students that had negative attitude about their home government, and were passive or indifferent to politics, did not exhibit strong feeling towards the government of the host country either. However, those that were more politically active, even if they were troubled by aspects of their home government, seemed to express a reserved, but generally positive response to their host country. The students that were exceptionally supportive of their home country did produce a few respondents that were quick to identify injustices they noted in the host countries in the qualitative section, but on the whole, this was not a politically charged sample. The main difference observed was that the Norwegians students of Group C in particular, were more consistent in their positive appraisals of their home government than the other groups. The international groups produced a slightly splintered division of opinion, but leaned towards a negative appraisal of their home country compared to Norway.

One aspect of government that both groups could agree on was how they perceived the level of bureaucracy abroad. Both groups suggested that they experienced less bureaucracy at home than abroad, no matter where they came from or where they studied. This was not really a surprise, as foreign nationals living abroad will certainly in most cases be required to carry additional documentation not required of domestic citizens. It was interesting that this was a point of contention seemed to influence many of the students' opinion of the country they visited, and gave them a newfound appreciation for the rights and privileges of citizenship.

In applying Giddens' theory, it became obvious that those students that managed to figure out the structure were able to move forward in the adaptation process. Those students that toiled with bureaucracy struggled because they did not understand the structure, thus they could not gain an advantageous position in it.

4.2 3 The Role of the International Exchange Programs

In attempting to determine the significance of the exchange programs, equal emphasis was placed on the quantitative findings as well as the qualitative essays in the determination of its influence on the overall experience. The role of the exchange program is certainly an important one in the early stages, as students are preparing to move abroad, completing official documentation, securing transit visa and registering for classes. Beyond that it was assumed that the level of involvement the exchange program facilitators played was somewhat inconsequential. The participant's surveys lead the researcher to reconsider the long-range affects on the students' international socialization and the degree of integration they experienced while abroad.

The students' responses seemed to suggest that the manner in which their program was organized greatly influenced the level of interaction the students had with their new environment. Programs that encouraged the integration of students into their host countries was presumed would lead to a more meaningful experience. This stance was prompted when the researcher noted the results of a series of questions that asked students; who they were friends with abroad and where they met these friends. Overwhelmingly the majority of the students reported to be friends with other international students, which they met either through in their housemates or through their activities facilitated through their program. Only a small percentage claimed that they had made friends with locals, through school organizations, or during outings around town (See Appendix 17). This seemed unfortunate, because it appeared that international students were not integrating into the local population.

As the researcher stopped to look at her own situation, it seemed that she also fell into this category, socializing primarily with students within her faculty which was almost entirely composed of foreign students. According to the evidence collected in this survey, along with personal experience, it seems that international exchange facilitators play a rather critical role in determining how integrated the students would become abroad. This is not to say that motivated, outgoing students will not go outside their immediate peer group and make new friends, because surely that type of student exists. However as this study suggests, it seems these participants did not strike out on their own to seek non-prescribed social interaction outside their immediate surroundings. Many indicated that they mingled mostly with other foreigners out of convenience, because that was with whom they lived and studied, and therefore be most likely to run into regularly. Even relaying back to the students' confidence rating, we can see that 27 percent of the sample showed some degree of discomfort when interacting with locals (See Appendix 5).

Perhaps the program facilitators are partly responsible for not creating more opportunities to coagulate the academics with social and cultural activities that encourage integration. As ironic as it may seem, the countries with the most infrastructure and largest capacities for international students may actually be hindering international students from integrating the most. For example, international students in Norway generally live in student villages, affectionately known as 'student ghettos', subsidized by the government. This housing option is a ideal choice for international students because it is perhaps the only affordable housing within close proximity to the universities. The international students actually get priority over domestic students for places in these housing compounds; the result is mini cities of mostly international students. These villages are often completely self-sustainable, as they have all the amenities one requires, including a post office, a grocery store, a gym, laundry facilities, a study hall, a movie screening room, and a café. Therefore the less adventurous international students are unlikely to strike out on their own to explore their host city and meet the locals. This exercise engenders learning about local customs and accelerates acclimation into the society, suggested by Wiers-Jenssen's research (1993). In countries such as Spain, and Portugal, housing is scarce even for the domestic population. Thus students are much more involved with their community and are forced to interact, and negotiate their own living situation as well as other aspects of international student life.

Another example of how infrastructural differences affect the students' relationships to each other, and with their host communities, is visible when comparing Northern and Southern Europe. The openness of the culture, not to mention a warmer climate in the south, allows for more outdoor activities. Also the fact that it is less expensive in Southern Europe as compared to Northern Europe, allows students to have more freedom to take excursions independent of their program. Cultural differences such as study habits can also play a role in socialization. In France and Southern Europe where fewer students live in dormitories, students are more inclined to study at cafés or in a public places, whereas Northern Europeans see study as a more of a solitary experience. Danish students as well as a student that studied in Denmark, both commented in the qualitative section about the usual study regiment, which was confined to their dorm room.

It is for these reasons that international exchange programs become integral in the socialization of their charges. If the objective of studying abroad is to introduce students to another culture as most programs promise, then more focus should be placed on making sure the students have an opportunity to interact with the local population. This is of particular concern is societies that are culturally less social to begin with, in countries that languages barriers are persistent, and any other country where students would be otherwise be hindered from integration. Social structures that may exclude international students for whatever reason must be circumvented through activities that encourage cross-cultural exchanges. The concern is that if international students are not fully integrated into the host society, the experience is almost theoretical, thus not serving its purpose, if the students have not actually had first hand interaction with their host countries. According to Bourdieu; social practice is necessary if *habitus* is to be overcome and given the identity to evolve. Naturally it would be best if the students took the initiative upon themselves, but in some contexts social barriers are erected that are out of the students' control. Some of these barriers could be alleviated by the program administration.

Another question, which was designed to generate evidence that the students had interacted with, and learned the local population, was posed by asking participants how living abroad

had shaped their opinion of the local society. 60 percent of the participants proclaimed that their opinion about the local society had changed at least somewhat, however, only 10 percent suggested that their opinion had changed drastically. Overall this was an encouraging sign that these students were attempting to relate and learn about the local population. The other 33.5 percent only cited marginal changes in their opinion of locals, and a small percent suggested nothing that had happened abroad that changed their opinion of the society they lived in. The remaining 6.5 percent oddly suggested that the question did not apply to them. These results made the researcher question the previous exposure the unaffected segment of the population. Could it be that this result meant that the students knew quite a lot about the country where they studied in prior to moving abroad, and therefore already had a good understanding of the culture? This seemed a reasonable explanation, but seemed unlikely that this could be the sole explanation. Another justification that seemed more plausible was that the participants' interaction with the locals was very limited and therefore it would be unlikely that their opinion swayed much (See Appendix 18). Another clue that buffered this theory was that students' opinion about other international students was more severely altered while abroad. This led the researcher to believe that it was the prolonged exposure to other international students that enhanced their understanding of other international cultures, rather than the local culture (See Appendix 19). This is not to suggest that interaction with other international students is not valuable in and of itself. Surely learning about other cultures is valuable, as is learning about the host country's culture; both are indeed essential to the international experience.

Another prompt that hinted at the international students' isolation was visible in the type of responses the participants offered in the qualitative section. These responses seemed to be a reaction to their immediate surrounding. The students seemed preoccupied with their specific program and living situation, having little to say about the country they visited or its' culture. This led the researcher to believe that their understanding of the entire country they visited was based on a very limited and unauthentic experience. For this reason, international exchange program facilitators should strive to create an environment that encourages tangible interaction with the local community.

4.3 Conclusion: Quantitative Findings

From the quantitative section of the survey much has been learned about international students, but explanation as to why these factoids are important will have to wait until the qualitative essays have been reviewed for a complete analysis.

It has been determined that the typical international students, according to this sample, come from educated families akin to that of other domestic college students. About half of the sample had parents or siblings that lived internationally, and many appeared to have done some internationally travel prior to studying abroad. The students were mostly from medium sized cities or towns that would not be considered multi-cultural, but there were visible minorities that coexisted in their community. The sample themselves, were almost entirely a member of the dominant ethnicity and culture of their home society. This fact, it is believed, has allowed them to feel confident in their ability to be accepted in a foreign society because they have probably not experienced much discrimination in their lives.

The students seemed to be generally fond of their home, and identified with it strongly from a cultural standpoint, but did not seem particularly interested in local politics of their nation. They did however seem to identify 'home' as a place where their interests resided; their family, friends, their school, and specific places within their community that they cherished, rather than the country or city itself.

The sample represented predominantly the humanistic fields of study; however students that studied law and medicine composed a significant percentage of the population. According to international statistics, this is not an accurate portrayal of international students' education focus worldwide. The researcher believes the reason for the predominance of students from the social science and education disciplines has to do with a certain personality type. Students in the humanistic fields would perhaps be more apt to participate in a study on this topic due to it being related to their field of interest. A second reason is that the researcher herself is in

the humanistic field, and therefore has more contact with sample candidates that study within the same faculty.

Once abroad, differentiation in the where the members of the sample studied, seemed to have a strong impact on how the participants responded to the remaining questions. If the students had a generally positive experience they responded favourably to their host country. Likewise, if they students had a negative experience, they responded negatively to the host country, and often displayed a 'patriotic trace' evidenced in the Dolby study (2004). Those students that were indifferent about their home seemed to also be indifferent about their host country.

Students' degree of integration seemed to have far-reaching effects on other aspects of studying abroad. Few students claimed that they had made many friends with locals. The international students were friends with each other, and relied on international program sponsored events to create a social environment where they felt welcome. The well-organized facilitation of the international program generated much praise in terms of making the transition relatively easy on the student, but these same students also indicated on another level that they were not integrating. This phenomenon seemed to negate the purpose of their sojourn abroad. Countries that balanced the two goals of making students comfortable, but also allowing them opportunity to make their own way, seemed to receive the highest accolades from international students. According to Giddens' theory, these students were not able to gain knowledge about the structure. Therefore, their identity development was stunted.

On the whole, the sample appeared socially well equipped to handle the challenges they would face abroad. The majority of the students appeared to approach the experience with a positive open attitude, which seems to set the tone for their sojourns. The sample seemed mentally unprepared to deal with the amount of bureaucracy and the teaching style abroad. Many students seemed to feel frustrated that they could expedite their needs quickly. They expressed confusion about the proper manner to address professors; some also cited language barriers. Thus the students became trapped in an in-between state. They were applying their

own cultural expectation to a new context, a problematic situation sited by Bhabha that frequently occurs as a by-product of human diaspora.

For students that studied in Norway, they were extremely preoccupied with the high cost of living. This seemed to be the most major stress that they encountered, and this for many students limited them from integrating with the local population. In the way that Norwegians studying in Poland for example, were able to afford to live like kings compared to the local population, international students in Norway were forced to live like poppers. The financial disparity between students and the host country had a large impact on the students' ability to integrate possibly more so than any other factor, although cannot be proven with this instrument. This is a problem that is believed in endemic to countries like Norway that have an extremely high cost of living compared with the rest of the world.

Thus far in the delineation of the surveys the researcher is presently surprised how well the students appear to be acclimating to living as an international student abroad, which she attributes to prior international experience. However she is concerned that the students do not appear to be learning about the local culture or interacting with the domestic population. It seems that the students are unintentionally choosing to isolate themselves by relying too much on the international exchange facilitator to introduce them to the country, rather than seeking information and experiences on their own. In the qualitative section these topics will be put under erasure, as more explanatory information is uncovered in Part II.

PART II

4.4 Qualitative Analysis

In the second section of the survey, the participants were asked five open-ended questions and directed to give examples to support their claims about selected issues pertaining to the international study environment. The conglomeration of these essays revealed some common problems and some creative solutions enacted to deal with challenges, cited by the participants about their international experiences. The students' achievements and disappointments will be documented and in this portion of the thesis, coupled with a discussion of the perceived benefits of international study based on the accounts of this sample group. Included in these discussions will follow the identification of learned cultural behaviours that have infiltrated the participants' daily lives, even after they returned home. These subtle changes have reportedly moulded the participants' identity, fundamentally altering their outlook about certain aspects of their life and their future plans. These changes appeared to be intrinsically linked to their experiences abroad.

The following sections of this chapter will be organized into separate discussions of each topic presented in the qualitative section of the survey. Each topic will be explored by engaging the responses put forth by the participants. To avoid confusion, analysis of the sample will be done individually by subgroups, beginning with the international groups (Groups A and B), followed by the Norwegian groups (Groups C and D). The reason for the division of the total sample is due to deliberate variations in the instruments, ignited by contextual differences between the subgroups. The sample will be reunited in the final analysis that will incorporate the qualitative results along with evidence gathered in the quantitative survey. This unification will form a complete theoretical portrait of the typical international student, which will be further developed and summed up in the concluding sections of this chapter.

4.4 1 Culture Clashes

In the first essay question that participants were asked to describe in their own words what types of culture clashes, if any, they experienced abroad, and how it affected them personally. This exercise produced more than simply a laundry list of cultural misunderstandings; it also uncovered indiscrete cultural ethnocentricities, juxtaposed by varying degrees of individual international exposure. Incongruent cultural expressions such as; manners, pleasantries, standards, and gestures led to social divides faced by many international students.

International students are presented with two options when it comes to dealing with culture clashes: to accept it, or reject it. The first option requires learning to accept and appreciate the dissimilar behaviour, and adhering to a model of accommodating behaviours that are conducive to the local culture. The other option seeks to preserve native culture, even when faced with adversity do to cultural divides between home and host cultures. It appears to be part of the nature of the typical 'international student', as evidenced by this study, to try to adapt to the system of the host country as long as no ethical flaws were found in the alternative practices. Several of the participants expressed discontent as they mourned the fatality of their preferred cultural application while abroad. However this test of their behavioural flexibility was eventually seen as a victory and was ultimately celebrated. Through sometimes funny, heartfelt, or commemorative tales of their peril, persecution, confusion, frustration, redemption and eventual acceptance of another way of life the student described their path to acclamation.

4.4 2 Perceptions of Norwegian Culture from Abroad

Group A and B's responses were difficult to analyze without conducting a deeper discussion with the respondents about the context of the situations they described, however it was clear that the international groups answered the question in a way that suggested a very different frame of reference than that of the Norwegian groups (See Appendix 20). Groups A in particular, discussed culture clashes that occurred between themselves and the other international students. Few students from the international groups had anything to say about Norway or Norwegian society. This seemed indicative of the researcher's own experience as

an international student in Norway. It seemed plausible that because the housing situation, the participants' universe was their student village, their classes, and their chosen form of transportation between the two places. Thus the life of an international student at MU or BC is a unique experience in and of itself, but may only a partial facsimile of life in Norway. Despite this observation, some interesting responses did spotlight some of the cultural distinction between Norway and the rest of the world.

The qualitative essays received from Group A and B regarding culture clashes raised several main issues that the researcher has grouped into five umbrella topic directives: *social relations and integration, communication, education and administration, gender roles and equality, and standards of living*. The most recurrent comments involved social relations between the international students and their housemates, often having to do with a lack of cohesion between varied cultural practices. Another similar source of contention was that of conflicting personalities that seemed to be forced together due to the design of the program or living situation. These were in most cases, not really culture clashes but rather personality clashes, which could have occurred between people of the same cultural background.

A pattern emerged regarding issues related to social relations and integration which were presented by quite few participants. One such participant from Germany remarked that it was difficult for her to start a conversation with her Norwegian flat-mates. In her experience, after she posed a question, or topic in which she hoped would initiate a discussion, the Norwegians, she described, would reply with short precise answers that closed the door to further discussion. Another example cited, was that Norwegians seemed to leave the room quickly after some light small talk, rather than hanging around until it was clear that the conversation was over. Another German student was disappointed that her Norwegian flat-mates did not seem to exemplify the same type of communal living environment as their German counterparts. This participant suggested activities such as; sharing kitchen utensils, or preparing communal meal together were common among housemates in Germany. An American student reflected that she often found herself eating alone in the communal kitchen she shared with seven other roommates, most of which were Norwegian. Another German student described a situation where her Norwegian roommates would prepare food then run

off to their room and lock their door behind them. It was apparent by the choice of words used to describe the experiences that no criticism was intended; it actually seemed to sadden the respondents that they were not able to better connect with their Norwegian housemates, which in many cases was their only access to Norwegian society. However, several Northern European participants from Groups A and a few Norwegians from Group C did make references to an unspoken unity among Northern Europeans. This sentiment seems to be in opposition to the situation described above, but it seemed that the issues discussed are specific to the student-housing environment.

The second most frequently spoken of culture clash, entitled *Education and Administration* had to do with the procedures of Norway. The students' remarks highlighted a sense of frustration felt by the international students in trying to understand an unfamiliar system in terms of the State and the University. Some of the participants commented on the multiple layers of bureaucracies that they had to wade through in order to establish themselves in Norway.

The final three recurrent categories of cultural clashes were much less prevalent, and were somewhat isolated problems, having to do with standards of living, communication and gender relations. Clashes regarding standards of living were mostly related to matters of food handling, and cleaning practices that varied between countries. These responses were actually very interesting because it displayed how instilled certain practical and procedural behaviours are ingrained in the culture of certain countries. One American student was convinced that certain food had to be refrigerated, but she noticed Norwegians stored these items in the kitchen cabinets. Another American wondered why Norwegians do not turn off lights when they leave the room, a practice that is drilled into the subconscious of all Americans from their childhood. A German student found it disgusting that Norwegians used sponges and cloths to clean dishes suggesting that a scrub brush was far superior. Communication was an issue for certain students that were not strong in Norwegian or English, but these were not frequent concerns. Finally, the issue of gender relations was introduced in terms of the openness of Norwegian culture in terms of sex, and public displays of affection. Two students, both from Non-European countries, said that they were not comfortable with the casual attitude towards sex expressed by Norwegians. Both conceded that they came from conservative societies where such behaviour would be considered scandalous. The

emphasis on equality between men and women has had far-reaching effects on the Norwegian society. This has that has augmented the traditional role of women, which can be a stark contrast when viewed through foreign eyes. Bhabha suggests foreigners have to "shift (their) sense of terrain" (Bhabha, 1996:55). This means that international students cannot apply local knowledge in divergent contexts and expect to gain a rational explanation that will make sense to them; rather they have to first understand the culture of the host country.

To the surprise of the researcher, only one participant commented on the Norwegian cuisine which international students had been forewarned about in their pre-arrival information packets would be expensive, and unique. The sole comment about Norwegian food was not directed so much at the food itself, but rather the atmosphere that accompanied it. This participant, from Switzerland, said that she was accustomed to a hot lunch, which was predicated on a longer, more social lunchtime atmosphere, which she found curiously missing in Norway. A typical Norwegians lunch by international standards really amounts to little more than a cold snack, and Norwegians do not take much time to eat lunch either. This could be because they tend to eat dinner rather early, made possible by a shorter workday than many other countries. This practice is naturally emulated in other sectors of society including the student population. Thus lunch in Norway is an informal affair, often enjoyed on the run between activities. It is somewhat social, but expediency and simplicity is a central component.

A compliment that was mentioned by several students from various countries about Norwegians, was their attention to keeping appointments and arriving promptly at the agreed upon time and place. This was juxtaposed by their evaluation of the inefficiency and relentless bureaucracy they experienced particularly when dealing with State or University administration.

The degree of emersion the participants where privy to, had much to do with their ability to offer critical assessments contrasting Norway and their home cultures. A subtle undertone expressed by the members of Groups A and B, evident in their comments, was a sense of mystery surrounding Norwegian society. The majority of the students seemed to lack a clear picture of the Norwegian cultural other than a few prominent stereotypes. Limited cultural

exchange may have been the reason for this. Thus the participant appeared to have gotten trapped by their pre-knowledge of what ‘normal’ looks and behaves like. According to Goffman, if people are not able to progress through this stage, abnormal behaviour becomes a ‘stigma’ that is associated with incorrect behaviour. After analysing the examples they offered, this led the researcher to believe they had based their opinion of Norwegian society on a narrow range of experiences. However, those participants that had visited Norway before, or were further along in their program, seemed to have been more knowledgeable about their host country, and were therefore able to offer more enlightening cultural evaluations.

4.4.3 Contrasting Cultures from the Norwegian perspective.

The qualitative essays received from Group C and D regarding culture clashes were in step with the same topic directives as mentioned in the previous section with the exception of issues related to communication (See Appendix 21). The participants in the Norwegian groups, appeared to be confident in their ability to meet the language requirements of the host countries, and in some cases felt that it was the locals that were not being sensitive to the fact that this was their second or third language. In contrast the international group appeared to internalise communication problems, blaming themselves for miscommunications.

The Norwegian participants cited culture clashes related to *social relations and integration* as the primary source of the problems they experienced abroad. Some of the reports from abroad produced some disheartening results from an overwhelming percentage of the participants that studied in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Many felt the locals treated them poorly. Most had experienced some type of perceived discrimination or aggression from the local population, mostly in the form of verbal attacks, but one student spoke of physical violence inflicted on a fellow international student. Some explanations as to nature of the conflict were a lack of English speakers in these countries, which made interaction difficult and sometimes led to misunderstandings. Another observation was that little emphasis was placed on service in the marketplace, which the Norwegians were put off by. The participants suspected the locals probably did not receive better treatment, the difference being they were not

accustomed to rude mannered shopkeepers. One student remarked that she was surprised when merchants or locals were actually friendly to her because it was so rare. Students that studied in Western Europe, Poland, Australia, Singapore, Turkey, and The United States articulated few problems when interacting with the local populations, other than the occasional language barrier. In fact a student that studied in Australia complimented the kind, helpful nature of the Australian people. Students that studied in Germany spoke of a sense of Northern European unity they observed. Most students that studied in Germany sited differences, but also comments on the similarities between Norway and Germany.

Another recurrent themes pertaining to social interaction which came up with much frequency among the male respondents was “drinking culture.” It is well known that Norwegians see the mass consumption of alcohol as sport, as well as a socially acceptable bonding activity, particularly among males, however females are hardly exempt from this form of entertainment. It just so happened that within this sample group, only the males commented on the drinking culture phenomenon. The male participants were quick to learn that; while abroad, the Norwegian drinking culture was not well received in many parts of continental Europe, particularly in the south. To paraphrase one student’s remarks; it is usual in countries like France, Spain, Italy and Greece to enjoy an alcoholic beverage at any hour of the day, but with a much lower overall consumption rate. This conflicted with the typical Norwegian style of drinking which does not begin until the latter evening hours, but at an accelerated consumption rate, often to excess. In Norway there is no enigmatic social stigma attached to such behaviour, rather, it is considered quite normal, especially when celebrating with friends. The students commented that studying in Southern Europe was a sobering experience figuratively and literally. The students seemed to be open to accepting the cultural norms of their host country in order to avoid being ostracized or in perceived as un-couth, but suggested they reverted back to their old ways once back in Norway. In this situation the students adapted to the structure temporarily, but had to unlearn the behaviour traits the obtained abroad after returning home in order to be accepted in their home culture.

Another theme that was linked to both social relations and also integration was religion. At the heart of many societies around the world is religion, and students' relationship to the local population was in some countries dependent on their religious affiliation. Several students that studied in various countries brought up the importance of respecting the host countries mainstream religion. Students that shared the same religious beliefs as the host country commented that it was nice to know that in the midst of unfamiliarity; they were comforted knowing the religious community would accept them. One student spoke of a strengthened relationship to her religion as a result of visiting the local church as a way of combating stress and loneliness endured abroad. However, for students that held conflicting religious beliefs, the presence of an opposing religious doctrine was something to be wary of. One student remarked that he had to be careful about saying something that went against the mainstream religious values of his host country. Another participant described feeling uncomfortable about being preached to by an overly zealous missionary. Some students admitted interactions about religion they had abroad actually helped them overcome preconceived ideas about other religions. One participant spoke positively of a chance meeting with a person of another religion that actually inspired her to critically examination of her own faith. It seemed that what these experiences had in common was they served as a stimulus, which caused the students to feel either opposition or community in terms of their beliefs. In some cases strengthening their resolve in who they were and what they believed, in other cases, opening their mind to other expressions of faith.

The second most frequently occurring culture clashes experienced by the participants was related to *Education and Administrative* differences. A general sense of confusion about the organization and distribution of power within the host university was of major concern for many of the participants though-out the entire sample. This was of particular concern among students that studied in Germany, Italy, and Spain. There was also some confusion about the proper manner in which to address figures of authority or service providers. This was chiefly said of Austria and Germany, as both countries were described as excessively formal societies as compared with Norway. One student was uncomfortable with the high degree of autonomy the professors possessed over the students under their supervision. A participant that studied in Spain also expressed dissatisfaction about the way the classes were conducted, suggesting the professors were too authoritative, treating the students like teenagers. A student that studied in the Netherlands seconded this notion.

An observation from a student that studied in Singapore painted a very different picture of the classroom environment; this participant felt it was the students that were disrespectful to the professors, by talking on mobile phones during lectures or simply projecting an air of blatantly dismissive behaviour. The Norwegian participant found this behaviour to be very rude, and she could not understand why the students were there if they were not interested in the lecture. The researcher wondered if the lectures were mandatory, as they often are in many countries. However in Norway, lecture attendance is somewhat voluntary, even under the new system, attendance is not always enforced. If this was the case, the researcher could understand why the Norwegian student was confused by the rebellious nature of the students, as this is not a common problem in the Norway among university students.

A topic that received some attention in the quantitative section was amplified in the qualitative section, was taken up by a Norwegian student that studied in the United States. This participant felt that the auxiliary personnel in the international office, both at home and abroad, lacked competence and negatively influenced the overall experience. Many other participants shared this sentiment as was evidenced in the quantitative section which found that 63 percent of the sample selected issues related to administration support and expediency as of the most difficult aspects of studying abroad.

The third most recurrent topic was related to gender relations and equality, which were the most prominent concern among females. It was not surprising that the Norwegian females that studied in France, Spain, and Turkey commented on the different social dynamic between men and women in these countries. The differences must have been especially stark in contrast to Norway, a country which has received international accolades for its social equality especially in terms of women's rights. A female participant that studied in France reported that she and her girlfriends received much unwanted attention from French males, blaming it on their blonde hair. One student drew a distinction between the apparently native Frenchmen and first and second-generation males who appeared to be of Middle Eastern ancestry. She observed these men pursued her more vigorously despite rejection. It startled her how direct she had to be in order to make it clear she was not interested. Female students

that studied in Spain and England reported of similar encounters. They suggested instances of cat calling however, were linked to class of certain segments of the local population rather than ethnicity.

It is important to note that most of these students studied in large cities, which must have had some bearing on the type of situations they encountered. As in any large city, there is sure to be much diversity in terms of culture. Therefore just because these observations were made in London or Paris for example, does not mean that these situations would not occur in any other large city world-wide. Additionally, it is important to consider the source of the information. In this case the majority of the participants were from residential areas rather than cities. They were also Norwegian females, born in the age of feminism; creating the perfect combination for a serious culture clash.

Other types of gender related cultural clashes had to do with body language, perceived intentions, and language barriers. A female that studied in England observed that it was not usual for men and women to be friends without the expectation of sexual tension. She observed that to look someone in the eye on the street suggested, “you wanted trouble or sex”. A male student that studied in Italy described a situation where he gave his Portuguese female friend a hug in public. He later learned that this behaviour was seen as being inappropriate as they were just friends, not a couple. This perfectly acceptable gesture between friends according to Norwegian standards, translated into a message, which was a bit forward by Southern European standards. A similar account was made mention of by a non-European student, from the international group, that studied in Norway. She remarked it unusual to her that many Westerners hug each other with the same casualness as a simple handshake. These interrelated stories are similar in that they illustrate how a single behaviour can so easily be lost in translation leading to serious resentment if left unaddressed.

A final category that received minor notoriety from the Norwegian students had to do with *standards of living*, which was emphasized to a greater degree by the international group. Unlike the international group, the comments took on a more macro approach. Observations about wealth, the general quality of the students’ accommodations, and the upkeep of public facilities were the main focus. One student that studied in Poland, when speaking about this

phenomenon, said that he had to be cognizant of his international comrades spending limitations before suggesting social activities, which he knew they could not afford. Another student recognized that there were many unsavoury areas in his host city due to a lack of wealth in the country. Norway obtusely, is a rich country, with one of the highest standards of living in the world, therefore the researcher supposes there is nowhere to go but down, thus these results are not unanticipated.

4.4 4 The Nation and the World: How International Students' Define 'Home'

The participants were asked to evaluate their relationship to their home country in light of having experienced an alternative way of life. It was predicted that living abroad for a period of time would evoke reflections on the connection the students felt towards their home country. In Nadine Dolby's study (2004), it was discovered that students tended to feel a nostalgic bond towards their home country and appreciate some aspects of life that they had once taken for granted. Another result of living abroad Dolby suggested was that curiosity about the world at large seemed to grow. According to Dolby, the experience changed many of the students' perspectives about their home and the rest of the world (2004).

In this survey the participants' experiences caused many of them to feel more compassion for foreign nationals living in their own country, particularly refugees and other displaced people. Many participants mentioned that they had always theoretically felt compassion for these people, but after having personally experienced the everyday struggles for themselves, they felt that they truly understood how difficult it could be.

It was decided that it would not be possible in this study to measure the difference in the students' emotional connection to their host and home countries quantitatively; therefore an open ended question was posed. The essay questions attempted to investigate how this diverse sample reacted to being abroad in terms of their connection to home and the world beyond their front door. The question was intentionally abstract, allowing the participants to explore the question from any angle; this was done to avoid unintentionally influencing the students.

The results produced a variety of thoughtful replies that were then categorized by topic and calculated for frequency to determine the most prevalent responses (See Appendix 22).

Among Groups A and B, the students offered mixed replies and produced some unexpected and enlightening responses. The response that occurred in the highest frequencies came from those students that reported that their connection to their home country had been strengthened as a result of studying abroad. This group represents 32 percent of Groups A and B, not including six of the participants that either did no answer the question or gave unclear answers. The nationalities of those that responded in this way, showed no strong pattern. The rationale behind their strengthened feeling towards home seemed grounded in an appreciation for the positive aspects about their home countries. These students showed no distain for their host country, yet yearned for the comforts of home, and expressed a longing to be reunited with family and friends. Most of the participants indicated that they were comfortable living in Norway, but they also identified aspects of Norwegian culture that disagreed with them, which forced them to see their home country in a new light. A unique subgroup also emerged from this segment of the sample, which stated that their connection to Europe and the European Union had replaced their connection to their home country. This group was primarily composed of German and Dutch participants, although it was also made mention of by a French student as well. This group brings to light a notable transition in identity construction of Europeans, signalling a shift in the way Europeans define themselves, and their relationship to the rest of Europe. To echo a point made earlier, the transitory nature of self-identity has become less tied to nation of origin, as modern society operates in concentric communities of like-minded individuals. These cells reinforce common ideals, which have replaced the nation as the primary basis for identity construction (Hall, 1996). In this case members of the European Union, felt a solidarity that is as strong, if no stronger than the bond they feel amongst their countrymen.

The second most prominent group, which composed 26 percent of the adjusted sample, suggested that their connection to their home and the rest of the world was equally strengthened and weakened and was somewhat torn between how enamoured they were by

the places they visited abroad, yet held a strong allegiance and appreciation for their home. One Canadian student summed up this emotion by explaining that:

During the winter Olympics I rooted for Norway, but when
I'm abroad, I'm proud to tell people I'm Canadian.

There were a few other students that discussed a similar type of split allegiance; first towards their home and second towards an emerging loyalty to their new home-away-from-home.

The third most prominent group, composing 20 percent of the adjusted sample, claimed that their connection to their home country had been weakened. A variety of reasons were offered as to why the relationship with their home country had decayed. Some stated that it was because they had already lived abroad prior to this experience. They suggested this meant that the process of detachment from their home country had already been initiated and just continued while abroad. Most participants that answered the question this way, showed no contempt for their home country, but the idea of staying in one place the rest of their life made them feel restless. Many explained that the world had become too big, and their place of origin had become too small. Thus indicating their home had become a less significant marker sense of self.

Surprisingly, 8 percent of the sample claimed that studying abroad had not impacted their feeling toward their home one way or another, and 4 percent claimed they did not feel any kinship to any one place, considering themselves cosmopolitans. One student called herself a 'nomad'; another said that her home was where her family and friends were, so country was an inconsequential formality, which she gave little thought to. An answer that came up a lot was the notion of a lack connection to one's country in the first place, and studying abroad seemed to only protract this sentiment.

4.4 5 The Nation and the World: How Norwegian Students' Define 'Home'

Groups C and D clearly exhibited a stronger connection to their home, a theory the researcher realized after reading their essays. However statistically, those students that reported a strengthened identity were only slightly higher than the international group (See Appendix 23). There was a tie between participants that reported to have a strengthened connection to home and those that stated that they felt equally connected and disconnected from their home. This could be a clue suggestive of an identity in transition. Each of these distinctions accumulated 39 percent of the Norwegian sample.

A distinct difference between the Norwegian group and the international group in terms of discussions about a strengthened connection to home differed in that the participants in Groups C and D referred specially to Norway. Some even went further to define a connection to their specific region of Norway. In terms of the international group, some defined a connection to Europe rather than their specific country, marking a notable departure from the Norwegians' responses. A side note that may explain this divide is the facts that currently Norway is not a member of the European Union and much of Norwegian society oppose the proposition of joining. These convictions defined by Groups C and D, were not apparently made out of nationalistic fervour, but rather, a well thought out preference to live amongst the natural landscape and beauty of their country. Many participants also expressed appreciation for preservation of Norwegian customs and folk culture, as well as the social and economic benefits they were thankful to privy to as Norwegian citizens.

As was mentioned above, there were an equal number of students that stated that they were torn between affection towards their home, and their adoration for their host country. Many spoke of increased curiosity about other lands, and seemed keen to seeking out unexplored territory in which to expand their horizons. This group included the largest number of male respondents, but showed no other strong patterns, except these were students that were enthusiastic about the experience. Many of the participants that suggested their relationship to their home had been strengthened conversely described a more negative experience abroad.

The third most frequently occurring responses were those that reported that their connection to their home had been weakened, composing 14 percent of the Groups C and D. Those that responded in this way included an equal distribution of males and females, and all seemed very confident that while they liked Norway, they also found it stifling. After being abroad, it became difficult for them to settle into their old routines, once they had become aware of what the rest of the world had to offer. The final 8 percent of the group, suggested that their connection to their home was unchanged, and that the experience did not really affect them much. More males than female composed this group.

4.5 The Total Sample: A Comparative Discussion of the Outcomes

The Norwegian Groups varied very much from the international groups in terms of their strident responses, which left little room for ambiguity. The international group seemed less confident in their classifications of their emotional connection to the world around them. The Norwegian students were perhaps more resolved in their assertions because most had already returned home or were nearing the end of their term abroad when they were surveyed. Unlike the international students, most of which were in the early stages of being abroad at the time they were surveyed. Some of the participants from Groups C and D were able to catalogue how their emotions changed during their time abroad. One student from Group C, described how in the early stages of being abroad she became skeptical about her home country and reacted more favourably to her host country. However as she began to uncover flaws within the host country, her feelings about home improved by default, realizing that all countries have their own triumphs and tribulations.

The Norwegian students were also asked a follow-up question about what in their life changed as a result of studying abroad, this question was not asked of Groups A and B because few of them had returned home at the time they were surveyed, while most of the members of Groups C and D had. The diversity of examples the students cited bolstered the argument that studying abroad penetrates the psyche of the participants and either temporally or eternally changes their outlook on life. Not all of the students altered their daily routines, in

fact some consciously, even defiantly, returned to their old routines. What is significant is that all the participants were forced to live their lives differently for a period of time, and were at a crossroads when they returned. Once home, decisions had to be made about how they would live their lives from that point forward. Some of the changes that the students experienced abroad were seen, as an enhancement. These responses can be view in Table I.

Table I: Positive Effects of Study Abroad

✓	Became coinsures of international cuisine
✓	Consume less beer
✓	Interact with new people more confidently
✓	More focused on studies
✓	More religious
✓	Watch less Television
✓	New international boyfriends / girlfriends
✓	Read international newspapers
✓	Listen to international music
✓	More open-minded
✓	New academic interests and motivation

Students also reported other changes that were seen as somewhat negative in the students' eyes can be viewed in Table J. The students suggested that events that transpired abroad challenged their preconceived ideas, and influenced them to not take certain activities as seriously as they once did. The Norwegians students for example, realized that other cultures do not stress themselves out about being on time, they found this freedom to be positive, so they decided to maintain that mentality back in Norway. However Norwegian society is concerned with keeping good time, thus their new behaviour was seen as negative by their compatriots. See Table J for other example about how the Norwegians students behaviour, changed after they returned to Norway.

Table J: Negative Effects of Studying Abroad

✓	Became less ambitious
✓	Spent money more frivolously
✓	Less concern about a regimented schedule
✓	Loss of community among classmates

4.6 Conclusion: Portrait of the International Student

Through the dual methodological approach that was used in this study, it became possible to view the same sample from two different perspectives. The quantitative outcomes provided the background information. This information was utilized to generate easily assessable references in which to gain general information about the sample, while the qualitative essays, offered a more in-depth look at the personalities of the participants. Viewing the data through these two complimentary lenses brought the sample life. These two approaches when viewed in unison made it possible to gain a clearer perspective of how study abroad impacts students' identities.

What can be learned from the data uncovered in this study is twofold. The first discovery revealed commonalities in the students' background; it also highlighted parallel transitions in the students' identities. Ultimately leading to divergent outcomes based on identified influential variables, such as gender, and country they studied in. The second discovery concerned the facilitation of the exchange program, which proved to be an influential variable, as did where the student studied, and how that jived with their background. The evidence gathered in this research when combined, makes it possible to present a verbal portrait of a typical international student. The degree of generalizability may be limited to ERASMUS students that studied in the same faculties, in the same countries, for the same duration of time. Indeed that margin of generalizability is narrow; however the broad findings were supported by the previous studies cited in the literature review.

4.6.1 International Students Background

The background commonalities the students shared suggest a very specific archetype. It became visible that these students came from a similar faction of society. Almost three-quarters of the sample had educated fathers, and more than half had educated mothers. About half had immediate family members that had lived abroad for six months or more. There was also evidence that suggested that perhaps as much of a quarter had foreign-born parent or a

situation where the family lived abroad for some amount of time. This claim was given credence when adding siblings to the equations. Students that said that they had lived abroad before often cited that both parents and a sibling also lived abroad as well. Additionally, the number of mothers and fathers that had lived abroad closely mirrored each other, making this claim seem plausible.

Three quarter of the students came from residential towns or medium sized cities. Few came from metropolitan centers, and an even smaller number came from rural areas. 98 percent of the sample identified themselves as represented the ethnic majority within their community. Most of the students were confident in their ability to interact with local population, suggesting that they had not experienced significant discrimination in their lives, which might make them wary of interaction with the dominant population. The sample may have also developed their confidence through previous international leisure travel. Travel ranked favourably as an important aspect of life; therefore it can safely be assumed that this is something they had some experience with. About a quarter of the sample had already lived or studied abroad prior to this survey.

This sample ranked family and friends as the most important aspects of life. The sample was split in terms of an appreciation for 'freedom', the international group ranked it as being of primary importance, while the Norwegian group placed it further down the scale. This sample overwhelmingly ranked attaining an advanced academic degree of major importance in their lives, but was less concerned with gaining marketable skills. Most were not concerned fiscal rewards, social status or personal appearance, although personal health received particular attention. In the median range of importance was travel and free time. This sample suggested they were unconcerned with politics, religion, and marriage (See Appendix 12).

This was a somewhat imprecise measure because many of the participants did not rank every aspect of life listed. In all there were 30 void rankings out of a possible 1,380 ranks, which was distributed among ninety-two participants. Each participant was allotted a total of 15 ranks. Each student was instructed to distribute three votes for each level of importance of

which there were five. However many, did not follow directions. It was possible; to identify trends in personality, identity, and preferences through this matrix, but it lacked validity due to weaknesses instrument used for this particular question.

4.6 2 The Effects of Studying Abroad

The sample differed slightly when asked to negotiate their sentimentality towards their home and host countries. The international group was slightly more outward looking, as a higher percentage of students that felt a weaker connection to home after studying abroad than in the Norwegian groups. However, the highest percentage of international students suggested that their connection to their home was been strengthened as a result of studying abroad. The second largest percentage of the international group suggested that they were in a transitional period, as felt an equal connection to both their home and host countries. The Norwegian students' connection to home was strengthened, although they also expressed being equally torn between their appreciation of Norway and the new places they had discovered. Only a small percentage of the Norwegian participants claimed that their connection to Norway had been weakened as a result of studying abroad.

An impression the researcher got from reading the essays and reviewing the quantitative data was that Norwegian identity is extremely strong. This is exemplified in Appendix 13 thru 15, where the Norwegian group generally expressed being more trusting of their government, more apt to display national symbols, and generally felt a strong bond towards expressions of Norwegian culture. In addition, Groups C and D's answers were almost expectant, as they seemed to respond to the essays with the same voice. The Norwegian students often prefaced their responses with background about how things differed in Norwegian culture, to help the researcher understand why something was foreign to them. While many of the continental Europeans seemed less focused on what possible impact being French, English, or Dutch, for example, had in terms of their perceptions and values. The continental Europeans seemed to feel community with other Europeans in the same way Norwegians felt a sense of community with each other. A funny observation related to the American, and Canadian essays, was that this group considered themselves outsiders in their home countries. Almost half the North

Americans surveyed, had a familiar connection to Norway. About half had also lived abroad for a significant period of time before being surveyed; both of these factors may have contributed to this sentiment. As far as the other national groups, there was not enough representation to get a clear picture of how much their national identity impacted their outlook on their host country.

Relaying back to the Dolby study (2004), some similar results were uncovered in the way that international students acclimated to their host country. In the beginning differences were very stark, and the student felt foreign, and the locals seemed strange. However, the sample in this study seemed to be much more confident that they would be accepted than those in the Dolby study. The researcher attributes this to increased international exposure on the part of the participants in this sample.

Groups C and D seemed to have unfettered confidence that the locals would accept them, and if they did not, they implied it were due to no fault of their own. This could be likened to what Lauren Berlant (1993) referred to as a 'patriotic trace'. The researcher is confident that it was not elitism at work, but perhaps it was privilege that instilled a somewhat judgmental critique of their host countries. Norway is a devoutly socialist country, with a high standard of living, few people are filthy rich, but everyone that works legally earns a living wage. Coming from this background, it makes sense that poverty is a foreign concept. Inequality would logically be more startling to those that were not accustomed to it through a lifetime of exposure.

4.6 3 The Responsibility of the International Program Facilitators

After analysis relying on both the fixed-answer responses and essays, it became apparent that apparent that international students travel in packs. In some cases the people the participants considered their friends abroad, were actually friends from back home that also studied in the same program abroad. Perhaps this practice projected an isolationist stance, which made it difficult for locals to infiltrate. It seems that this was perpetuated however the program

facilitators' not creating sufficient opportunities for the international student to interact with the domestic students. That being said, the international students also have to take responsibility for their own socialization. In certain countries it seemed that this naturally occurred. Students that were isolated due to language barriers seemed to be especially needy in terms of program initiated integration.

Students that studied in Hungary and the Czech Republic had an especially difficult time interacting with local, which was partially related to language and culture, but also related to the fact that they were not integrated into regular classes, with the domestic students. In Norway, the living situation seemed partially to blame for the lack of interaction with Norwegians, but it also seemed that it was primarily Norwegian culture that made interaction with stranger uncomfortable. As Norwegians can be a rather shy lot, and not outwardly social with people they do not know, this can be a particularly difficult group to strike up a friendship with. Thus more could be done to encourage integration with locals.

5. Final Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The goal of this thesis was to determine whether study abroad triggers identity transformation in university students. In order to explore this topic; a sample group of ninety-two participants was assembled, that studied in one of twenty-four different countries in 2005. The participants completed a comprehensive survey that incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data.

The participants' backgrounds were investigated as a means of gaining perspective about their home environment. It was believed environmental factors that may have influence their identity orientation prior to studying abroad. Based on the findings in the Dolby study (2004), that those students that had early multicultural exposure acclimated abroad smoothly, while students that had less multicultural exposure had a more difficult time adjusting. The implication the researcher suspected was that students whom had early multicultural exposure would perhaps already be cultural hybrids, thus the transformation process may have already been initiated, and more difficult to study. Conversely, students from a homogeneous environment, with little multicultural exposure, would be confronting culture differences possibly for the first time. This group it was expected would display more stark identity shift, that are more visible.

During the course of this research process, other issues surfaced, which were believed, interfered with students' ability to integrate with the local population. These issues were unrelated to pre-knowledge or home environment, but rather due to the way their exchange program was facilitated. One such factor that seemed to negatively effects students' ability to integrate appeared to be due inadvertent isolation of the international students from the domestic students. These issues perhaps stunted their ability to gain an accurate understanding of the local culture, disallowing them an authentic experience abroad. Students that were suppressed in this way did not appear to experience the same amount of personal growth as those students that were able to successfully integrate.

5.2 Discoveries

Groups A and B were a very mixed bunch, which might explain why the discoveries were a bit muted compared with Groups C and D. The international groups that studied in Norway appeared to be limited in their ability to integrate with the domestic student body. This, coupled with their living situation, put them at a disadvantage in terms of learning about Norwegian society. Most of the students suggested that they primarily associated with other international students that they meet through their exchange program, through their classes, or through their housemates. Only a small minority even suggested they had friends that were domestic students. Other evidence to support the claim that Groups A and B were more isolated was obtained when the researcher looked at their opinions of the host country's system of governance as compared to that of their home. 14 percent claimed they did not have enough information to have an opinion about their host country, double the percentage of Groups C and D.

Another piece of evidence suggestive of isolation was that their opinion about international students had changed more than their opinion of the local population, possibly indicating that they had more exposure to international students. Although, some student seemed to get the impression that to have a changed opinion, meant that you thought more negatively about the people in question. This was not what researcher was intending. It was meant as a straightforward question aiming to discern how much they had learned about others, not an attempt to dig up dirt on a particular group.

Perhaps the most powerful effect that was cited by the international groups was by those students that came from European Union member states; who suggested that they felt solidarity with other EU member participants. Those that expressed this sentiment claimed they felt less connected with their specific country and stronger 'European identity'. When asked about their connection to home, the statistical distribution suggested many experienced had a strengthened connection to their home; however some students adjusted the question saying a strengthened connection to Europe. If those students that answered the question in

this way are removed from the matrix, and the outcomes redistributed, it becomes almost equally distributed between a *strengthened*, *weakened*, and *in-transition* effect.

These somewhat schizophrenic results seem to sum up one of the major trends uncovered in the international groups, one of confusion. The researcher attributes the wide range of answers to two factors; one that they come from varied backgrounds, which then explains why they might react very different. Secondly, that they were surveyed after only being abroad for one to two months. The Norwegian groups had been abroad at least an entire term, some had been abroad an entire year at the time they were surveyed.

The Norwegian student abroad that composed Groups C and D offered a clearer picture of their experience abroad and their opinions of the host country. The Norwegian students differed in that they seemed to have more influential experience. First-time study abroad students overall suggested that transformation had occurred. Students that had studied abroad before seemed less influenced by the experience. Those first-time study abroad students expressed having more issues with culture clashes, and social relations, however seemed excited to maintain some aspects of foreign culture which they had pickup abroad even after they returned home. At the same time, the Norwegians, in particular, also expressed a strengthened appreciation for home, even if they choose to adopt a more continental identity.

5.3 Theoretical Justification

In order to accept that identity negotiation is even possible is dependant on a fundamental epistemological frame that suggests that identity is actively constructed, rather than predestined. The researcher suggests that identity is indeed actively constructed, and that when international students are transplanted into an alternate context this activates the identity transformation process. According to this paradigm, individuals sort through possible cultural attributes in order to find one that is befitting. This is a concept relative to Goffman's theory about identity, as well as Giddens' Structuration Theory.

When viewing the finding through Giddens' frame, it can be assumed that those students that appeared to have returned from abroad with an altered identity were those students that were able to figure out the structure. Once the international students became aware of how the structure functioned, they were able to acclimate to it, and absorb desirable traits, which would ultimately allow them to move freely within the structure. Thus information and knowledge of the local culture facilitated a shift in identity as a means of thriving in the host country. It is unclear if these changes were permanent, because according to this rational, the students may need to revert to their old identity when they return home as a survival mechanism. However, it is believed that it may not be possible to banish traces of their internationally adjusted identity that have become dear to them without creating internal chaos.

5.4 A Critical Evaluation of the Findings

Even with the dual methodological approach that was undertaken in this thesis, it is impossible to definitively state that students experienced led to an altered identity as a result of international study. This is because it is perhaps not possible to measure an attribute as elusive as identity without inviting validity and therefore interpretation errors. However that experience certainly altered their perspectives of those involved, a statement some students affirmed explicitly. The qualitative essays were crucial to the claims made in this thesis, as many students sited that some aspects of their life changed after they returned home even if they felt like the same person.

The instrument used to collect the quantitative data appeared to be trustworthy, however the evidence collected was devoid of certain explanatory detail that would be necessary in order to make a qualified judgment of the outcomes. The quantitative evidence furthermore, was difficult to analyze independently because there were so many possible contingencies, which may have created rival explanations for a certain response. Also it was not possible to limit external influences. An external interference that impacted the results was the students' relative international experience. Students that had been abroad before, perhaps would have had the same reactions as a first-time international students to a certain question, but since the experience was not new to them, perhaps the variable being discussed had lost its potency.

Another external influence had to do with cultural orientations toward critical evaluations. From the surface, it appeared that Western Europeans, and North Americans were much more critical when they encountered problems, than those from Former Soviet or non-western countries. It was believed that this would have been an incorrect assumption. The researcher proposes that two alternate factors were responsible for this variance. The first being competence in English, which appeared to be generally stronger among the Westerners, thus they were more comfortable giving lots of details due to a more abundant vocabulary. The second, and more dominant rationale, is believed is cultural. North Americans, and Western Europeans are used to being asked to evaluate a program. The basic framework of an evaluation they are taught incorporates both positive and negative effects. The researcher discovered that non-westerns were less apt to discuss negative aspects of international study but rather they stated what they liked.

Perhaps the most enlightening portion of the survey was the *Open Notebook* question. This question asked the participants to share any information related to the international experience that had a particularly profound affect on them. Again Western voices were more prominent, probably due to the factors listed above; however it was extremely useful to the researcher in terms of understanding of the students' motivation to study abroad and what they gained from the experience. The essays presented narratives that would be useful in future research. Unfortunately their usefulness was limited in this study because the researcher had not preconceived of the topics presented, and therefore been able to formulate a means of gain all the students' perspective on the topic.

5.5 Ideas for Future Research

If time had permitted, the researcher would have assembled a focus group posing questions similar to those found in the qualitative section of this study. It would have created an opportunity for the researcher to gain clarification about issue that affected the sample group in more detail. It would perhaps have been more effective than individual interviews because

the students could comment on what others had to say; perhaps challenging each other to more thoroughly explain themselves. Also if the students might be reminded of something based on the other students comments, which might have a synergistic affect of the course of the discussion.

Separating the sample into subgroups made the analysis process much easier, when the researcher first viewed the data as one group it was very convoluted and presented no clear determinations. After the participants were divided into different groups more clear-cut demographic variation became visible.

The instrument could be improved, as it was unclear which factors would be most relevant in the identity augmentation of students. Many questions would later be realized were superfluous and could have been omitted. If a researcher were to further explore this subject, more focus could be placed on gaining specific examples that force the sample to identify what factors exactly influences the identity shifts they experience. As there was much variation in the nationalities and context the participants studied in it was difficult for the researcher to understand the nature of their comments at times. Selecting a less varied sample, with fewer contextual differences could have solved for this problem.

Considering the limited time and budget that was allotted for this project, the research process was productive. Delivering the survey by means of the internet proved to be the most efficient part of the research process, with the exception of a few minor technological glitches, the researcher believes it definitely improved the response rate. Perhaps if the survey was made even more user friendly, than the response rate could have been even higher, for those participants that did not complete their survey was partially due to problems opening the attachment. If a webpage were to be setup, where the participants could log on and click on their answers and send directly, rather than having to attach their survey as an email that would be a worthwhile addition.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Parents' Education

	Attended College	
	Real Number	Percentage
Mother	54	59 %
Father	67	73 %
Both	48	52 %

Appendix 2: The International Experience of the Sample's Families

Parents or Siblings that Lived Abroad		No Parents or Siblings that Lived Abroad		Total	
Real Number	Percent	Real Number	Percent	Real Number	Percent
43	47 %	49	53 %	92	100 %

Appendix 3: Countries of Origin Compared with Participants' Families International Experience

At Least Half Had Family Members Abroad	Less Than Half Had Family Members Abroad	Less Than a Quarter Had Family Members Abroad
Austria Belgium Bulgaria Canada Denmark Estonia France Latvia Norway Serbia-Montenegro Slovakia Spain Switzerland	Germany The Netherlands Poland UK USA	China Czech Republic Indonesia Lithuania Russia

Appendix 4: Future Study Abroad Plans

Plan to Study Abroad Again, But in Another Country		Plan to Return to the Same Country to Study or Work	
47	51 %	54	59 %

Appendix 5: Expectation about Courtesy Total Sample

Especially Kind and Considerate		Same Treatment as other locals		Cordial but Uneasy		Dislike / Insensitivity		Other	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
23	25 %	36	40 %	20	22 %	5	5 %	7	8 %

1 Null Response

Appendix 6: Contrasting Expectations of Courtesy

Especially Kind and Considerate		Same Treatment as other locals		Cordial, but uneasy		Dislike, insensitivity		Other	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
48%	17%	28%	44%	12%	26%	4%	6%	8%	7%

1 Null Response (female)

Appendix 7: Expectation of the Degree of Courtesy From Locals

Country Where They Studied	Especially Kind / Considerate		Same as Any other Local		Cordial, but Uneasy		Dislike, Insincere		Other	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Australia	1			1						
Austria				1						
Czech Republic	1		1		1			1		
Denmark						1				
England				2						
France				2		2	1			2
Germany	1		1	3		1				1
Hungary										1
Ireland		1		1						
Italy	1		2					1		
Netherlands						1				
Norway	7	9	3	19	2	9		2	1	2
Poland	1									
Singapore		1								
Spain						2				
Turkey						1				
USA									1	
Total	12	11	7	29	3	17	1	4	2	5

Real Numbers. 1 Null Response (female that studied in Norway)

Appendix 8: Positive Correlation between Aspects of Life

		Religion	Marriage
Religion	Pearson Correlation	1	1.000**
	2 tailed		.000
	N	92	92
Marriage	Pearson Correlation	1.000**	1
	2 tailed	.000	
	N	92	92

**Correlation Significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)*

Appendix 9: Positive Correlation Between Values

		Free Time/ Quality of Life	Travel
Free Time/ Quality of Life	Pearson Correlation	1	.571**
	2 tailed		.000
	N	92	92
Travel	Pearson Correlation	.571**	1
	2 tailed	.000	
	N	92	92

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)*

Appendix 10: Negative Correlation between Education Outcomes

		Marketable Skills	Advanced Degree
Marketable Skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.123
	2 tailed		.242
	N	92	92
Advanced Degree	Pearson Correlation	.123	1
	2 tailed	.242	
	N	92	92

**Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)*

Appendix 11: The Value of ‘Health’ Distributed by Area of Study

Areas of Study	Most Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Low Importance	Not Important	Total
Art	3	1	2	1	0	7
Business/ Economics	1	2	1	0	0	4
Computer Science	1	0	0	0	0	1
Education	8	3	1	0	0	13
Language	3	0	0	0	1	4
Law	3	4	2	0	1	10
Literature	1	2	0	0	0	4
Medicine	5	2	1	0	0	8
Political Science	3	3	4	0	1	12
Psychology	1	1	1	0	0	3
Social Science	6	12	2	1	0	21
Science	4	1	0	0	0	5
Total	39	21	14	2	3	89

Displayed in Real Numbers. 3 Null Responses: 1 from Education, 1 from Literature, 1 Political Science

Appendix 12: International Student Values Matrix (shown as real numbers)

Aspects of Life	Most Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Low Importance	Not Important	Null Responses
Advanced Degree	18	46	21	7	0	0
Religious Faith	5	6	5	18	57	1
Family	73	12	4	1	1	1
Social Status	2	7	17	34	26	6
Politics	0	8	21	30	31	2
Money/ Wealth	9	10	27	32	13	1
Freedom	44	26	15	3	3	1
Friends	56	26	7	2	0	3
Appearance	3	13	14	33	26	3
Personal Health	39	31	14	2	3	3
Marriage	9	8	15	21	38	1
Marketable Skills	4	7	18	25	36	2
Free Time/ Quality	29	38	15	7	2	1
Traveling	4	19	38	21	7	3
Honor/ Loyalty	4	18	31	23	14	2

3 votes per participants for each ranked value judgment, totaling 15 votes participant equally distributed

Appendix 13: Feelings about National Expression through Song

	Group A and B		Groups C and D		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Proud	12	21 %	13	36 %	25	27 %
Nostalgic	10	18 %	10	27 %	20	22 %
Mixed Feelings	17	30 %	8	22 %	25	27 %
Indifferent	15	27 %	5	13 %	20	22 %
Shame	2	4 %	0	0 %	2	2 %
Total	56	100 %	36	100 %	92	100 %

Appendix 14: Display of National Symbols

	Group A and B		Groups C and D		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Always	0	0 %	1	2 %	1	1 %
Often	2	4 %	3	8 %	5	5 %
Sometimes	27	48 %	17	47 %	44	48 %
Never	27	48 %	14	39 %	41	45 %
Total	56	100 %	35	100 %	91	100 %

**1 null response from Group C.*

Appendix 15: Degree of Trust in Home Government

	Group A and B		Groups C and D		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Complete Trust	5	9 %	14	39 %	19	20 %
Much Trust	27	48 %	20	56 %	48	52 %
Some Trust	22	41 %	2	6 %	25	27 %
No Trust	1	2 %	0	0 %	1	1 %
Total	56	100 %	36	100 %	92	100 %

Appendix 16: Perceptions of Home Government Compared to Host Government

	Effectiveness		Fairness		Bureaucracy		Same	Don't Know
	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less		
Groups A/B	11 %	43 %	5 %	29 %	21 %	55 %	22 %	14 %
Groups C/D	56 %	3 %	36 %	3 %	6 %	36 %	11 %	7 %
Total Percent of Sample	28 %	27 %	17 %	19 %	14 %	17 %	19 %	11 %

Participants each allowed to give more than one answer. Most of participants did not comment on all of the aspects of government

Appendix 17: Socialization Activity Abroad Cross Tabulation

	Classes	Exchange Program	School Organization	Outings in the City	Housemates	Other
Locals from Host country	4	3	0	2	5	1
International Students	16	23	7	3	19	0
People From Home Country	2	0	0	0	1	2
Mix of all Above	16	5	2	2	15	6
Other	0	0	0	0	1	0
No Friends Abroad	0	0	0	0	0	1

Participants allowed to give more than one answer

Appendix 18: Changes in Opinion about the Local Population

Groups	Very Much		Somewhat		Not Much		Not At All		Does Not Apply	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
A/ B	5	9 %	26	46 %	16	29 %	5	9 %	4	7 %
C/ D	4	11 %	20	56 %	9	25 %	1	3 %	2	6 %
Total Sample	9	10 %	46	50 %	25	27 %	6	6.50%	6	6.50%

Participants allowed to give more than one answer

Appendix 19: Changes in Opinion about other International Students

Groups	Very Much		Somewhat		Not Much		Not At All		Does Not Apply	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
A/ B	9	16 %	25	45 %	16	29 %	3	5 %	3	5 %

Groups C and D not surveyed about this question because of the variance in their experience

Appendix 20: International Students' Culture Clash Typology

Host Country	Education & Administration		Gender Relations & Equality		Standards of Living		Social Relations & Integration		Communication	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Belgium						1				
Belarus								1		
Bulgaria		1								
Canada				1						
China				1						
Czech Republic								1		
Denmark		1								
Germany		1				1	1	2		1
France										
Indonesia				1						
Netherlands						1		1		
Russia										1
Serbia & Montenegro		1								
Slovak Republic										
Spain								1		
Switzerland		1								
UK	1						1			
USA		1				1		2*	1	
TOTALS	7		3		4		11		3	

**M=male, F=female. One of the two of the students studied in Denmark*

Appendix 21: Norwegian Students' Culture Clash Typology

Host Country	Education & Administration		Gender Equality & Relations		Standards of Living		Social Relations & Integration	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Austria		1						
Czech Republic					1		1	1
England				1				
France	1			2				2
Hungary								1
Germany		1				1	1	
Italy		1			1		3	
Netherlands		1						1
Poland							1	
Singapore		1						
Spain		1		1				
Turkey		1						
TOTALS	8		4		3		11	

**M= male, F= female*

Appendix 22: International Students' Connection to Home

Country of Origin	Strengthened		Weakened		In Transition 'Both'		Cosmopolitan 'Neither'		No Change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Albania						1				
Austria		1						1		
Belgium								1		
Belarus				1						
Bulgaria		1								
Canada		1								
China				1						
Czech Republic				1						
Denmark					1	1				
Estonia						1				1
France		1						1		
Germany	2	3*		1	1	2		1		2
Indonesia		1								
Latvia					1					
Lithuania						1				
Netherlands	1*	2	1							
Poland								1		
Russia								1		1
Serbia Mont.								1		
Slovak Republic				1						
Switzerland		1								
UK		1			2					
USA	1		1	3		2				
TOTALS	16		10		13		7		4	

*M= male, F= Female. Two of the Three students' connection was strengthened to the European Union more so than to their home country. (2 null responses from females from Spain, and Poland)

Appendix 23: Norwegian Students' Connection to Home

Host Countries	Strengthened		Weakened		In Transition 'Both'		No Change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Australia					1	1		
Austria						1		
Czech Republic		1			2		1	
England				1		1		
France		3	1			2		
Germany	1	3				2		1
Hungary		1						
Ireland		1				1		
Italy		1	1	1	1			
Netherlands						1		
Poland	1							
Singapore				1				
Spain		1				1		
Turkey		1						
USA							1	
TOTALS	14		5		14		3	

**M= male, F= Female*

Appendix 24: Code of Conduct

This document was included with the letter of introduction about the researcher and the project prepared by the ERASMUS coordinators.

- I. All participants will be offered the opportunity to remain anonymous.
- II. All information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.
- III. All participants that have completed a survey will have the opportunity to verify statements recorded in the survey and resend any statements immediately or at anytime up until the final draft is printed: April 15, 2006.
- IV. Participants may receive a copy of the final report upon request via email.
- V. If any participants that have participated in a recorded interview may request the original recording be deleted and any copies of the transcript after the thesis has been assessed.
- VI. The research is to be assessed by the University of Oslo for examination purposes only, but should the question of publication arise at a later date, permission will be sought from participants.
- VII. The research will attempt to explore the experiences of ERASMUS students in terms of personal identity associations, and will not be used for any other purposes.

Appendix 25: Letter of Permission

This letter was included with the survey.

Introduction: My name is Mandie Marie Fiske; I am a second year Masters student in Comparative and International Education faculty at the University of Oslo. I am seeking volunteers to take part in a survey regarding your experiences as an international student, studying in Norway that will be used in conjunction with my Master Thesis. The researcher is fully funding the study with no outside financial sponsorship. The tutor that is advising the researcher on matters related style and format is Dr.M.Nurul I.Shekh, associate professor at Oslo University College, that will read the content for the purpose of advising me, but is not responsible for the content. Below find our contact information:

Researcher:

mandif@student.uv.uio.no

Tutor:

Nurul.Shekh@hio.no

The Topic: “Culture Clash to Cosmopolitization” (working title)

My topic focuses on students’ identity construction, specifically, national and cultural aspects of identity. Gaining insight on this information will lead into a discussion on the impact of student mobility in an increasingly global society.

The researcher shall administer a survey intended to gather data about the participants background, such as; gender, age group, level of education of the participant their parents, demographic information about the city they come from, language ability, quality of life preferences, as well as the participants experiences as a student in Norway with a focus on cultural differences between Norway and the participants home country.

Methodology:

The researcher hopes to include the surveys of 50-100 students in the final report, these volunteers will be approached personally by the researcher and asked at that time if they are willing to participate. The ideal candidate is an international student, studying in Norway as part of an ERASMUS exchange program or a Norwegian student that has studied in another country as part of the ERASMUS program. Most of the participants will be undergraduates, but a small percentage may also be graduate students.

This is primarily a quantitative study, relying on data derived from a single survey. Most of the data is nominal or ordinal, with fixed replies. Just a few open-ended short answer questions will be included. The open-ended questions will not be measured per-say, rather used for discussion in the analysis portion of the thesis. Quantitative data will be coded numerically and imputed into an SPSS or EXCEL style program to be measured, and cross-tabulated for the purpose of analysis. The information will be stored on a memory stick and backed up on a CD, these will be the only electronic files storing the data.

The culmination of this data is designed to paint a verbal portrait of the typical ERASMUS student, which can be applied to existing theories about student identity, student mobility, and education preferences. After the final report has been accessed by the institute and a grade is awarded to the researcher, the information will be deleted and any paper copies destroyed.

Reputability and Confidentiality Guarantee:

Professional conduct will be adhered to in securing the anonymity of the participants. In order to ensure that participants' personal identity is kept private the researcher has explicitly asked all participants to give a fictitious name, and to not include a personal address or telephone number, unless it is the only means of contacting the participant, an email address will be the contact link between the researcher and the participants. Once the participants has returned the survey the email address will be deleted and the fictitious names numerically coded randomly. Tracing personal identity would be an arduous task, and there would only be a short window of time in which access would even be possible to the students' personal identity, as it is only 30 days lapse time between the time of participation inquires and the last call for surveys. Once the surveys are collected, they will be coded and email addresses will be deleted. No records will be kept by the researcher beyond the closing day for survey admission. The faculty advisors will not have access at any time to raw data, they will only see the final product, and no one else will have access to the data.

Participation:

Any participant that agree to take part in this research project shall do so of their own free will and is in no way required to answer any question that they might feel is too personal. The researcher encourages the participant to fill out all the fields of information in order to benefit the outcome of the study, but in no requires any volunteer to divulge any details about their life that would infringe on their right to privacy. If at any point the participants wish to recant or change any statement, or withdraw their survey, this will be possible until the final draft of the report has gone to press April 1, 2006.

Time Frame:

The project will begin in September with the acquisition of participants, the last call for participants will be September 15, 2005, then the deadline for survey delivery will be October 15, 2005, at which time the email address will be deleted, and the study closed to any other participation. The researcher will begin the write up after October 15, 2005, and have the study ready for submission May 3, 2006. After the final grade is awarded any remaining data will be discarded the university be the only body with access to the final report strictly for the purpose of assessment.

Reporting:

The researcher has filed an application to conduct research in Norway with the NSD *personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS*. This body grants permission to conduct research within Norway, more information can be gained at: <http://www.nsd.uib.no> by referring to project number 13042. The NSB or any other outside body shall not have access to the raw data.

"I, the researcher will treat all personal information professionally, and not allow the data to be used for any other purpose than discussed above, and promise to delete all email addresses once the survey is collected."

Mandie Marie Fiske/ 28/08/05

"I have read and understand the terms and conditions of the study discussed above and am willing to participate _____"

Appendix 26: Definition of Terms Provided to Participants

These definitions were included with the survey.

Culture: The sum total of patterns of behavior, norms learned over a lifetime and exhibited by people that grow up in the same society, or part of a country. Byproducts of human work and thought.

Culture Clash: conflicting behavioral norms, behaviors or traits of other cultures that are in opposition to those of your own culture.

Demographics: A description of the type of people that live in a certain community, for example; perhaps their many minorities, or perhaps most people are involved in the worker union, or perhaps there are an unusually high number of people that are wealthy, etc.

Dominate Culture: This can be the group that has the largest number of members, or it can be the group that has the most power within a society, often it is one in the same, but there are exceptions (more Africans in South Africa than Europeans, but the minority still maintains considerable influence and wealth)

Homogeneous: the opposite of multi-cultural, suggests a population that is lacking diversity, indicative that most of the inhabitation were born into that community, and that most people share common traditions, religion, language, etc.

Indifferent: indicative of no change in emotion or behavior, null response.

Large City: Generally has an airport, may be a capital city, a mixture of house and flats, probably not the largest city in the country, but significant contributor to the economic activity and total population of the country. (Examples: Oslo, Manchester, Miami)

Majority: (most) Similar to 'dominate', this group often holds the bulk of the power, but in the context of the questions, the researcher is seeking to determine in question 18, to get an idea if which ethnic group you represent, and in question 19, to find out if you conform to the political and social beliefs of most people in your country.

Metropolis: Urban areas with extremely large populations, often a capital city, cultural, industrial and financial centers, usually the largest city in the country. (Examples: Tokyo, New York City, Mexico City, etc)

Minority: in the context of the question where this term is used, the researcher will exclude gender as a possible marker of inequality, therefore if you are female and would otherwise fit into a majority

group except for being female, count yourself as a majority member. Minority, in this context shall be delimited to groups with small in numbers, or exceptionally low relative power.

Multi-Cultural: a variety of people from an alternate backgrounds, including; religious, ethnic, and linguistic, all residing in the same physical area, along with the native or dominate population.

Native Tongue: the first language you learned from birth, or language that you are most familiar with, often but not always the main language spoken in your home country.

Nostalgic: A feeling generating an emotional attachment to positive or bittersweet memories, longing, something like the condition of homesickness.

Premise: a topic, the main point, central argument of a subject.

Prominent: (visible) (apparent) referring to a well defined group of people that are easily recognized and have ties to the same background, ethnic heritage or possible religion.

Proud: patriotic, strong sense of civic solidarity, loyalty, love and respect for country.

Rural Area: Isolated, geographically distant to a large city, often a farming community, or mountain village, countryside, small population, only light commercial infrastructure. (Example: Australian outback, villages in Amazon jungle, mountain towns in Alps, etc.)

Shame: Severe negative reaction grounded in embarrassment or guilt.

Town/ Suburban Area: Often adjacent to a large city, usually a mix of houses and flats, less commerce, more families, probably doesn't have an airport, more open space than a city. (Example: Kongsberg, Oxford, could be districts of large city, or sovereign cities.

Appendix 27: Information and Survey Direction

This document was included with the survey to inform the participants how to fill out the survey and delivery it.

How to complete the Survey:

1. The survey itself consists of several open-ended questions that call for short answer explanations. However, most of the questions are multiple-choice with fixed answers. Please select the answer that is the most appropriate, choosing just one answer unless instructed to select more than one. List your answer (a, b, c, d, e, sometimes f, g, h.) in front of the line provided to the left of the corresponding numbered question.

1. My apologies for the arcane choice of format, however not everyone is familiar with how to use other more high tech programs, therefore to make it was easy as possible on everyone, this document is in WORD, this poses certain problems when typing onto the document, the formatting will become somewhat misaligned, don't worry about it, as long as I can read your answer it is fine. – Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Please answer every question. If you feel that a question is too personal, as a volunteer you have the right to not answer, but so that the researcher knows that you have skipped a question intentionally, please put an **X** in the space provided, rather than leaving it blank.

If a question is unclear, first consult the DEFINITION OF TERMS by scrolling down to the bottom of the survey, or download from the choice of attachments. If the fixed answers are not suitable and you would like to clarify your response, you are encouraged to do so by marking an asterisk (*) as your answer then write the researcher a note at the end of the survey including the question number and your comment.

How to Delivery the Survey: (EMAIL options)

(1) I have sent the document as an attachment, DOWNLOAD and OPEN the attachment, type your answers directly on the document, then save the document and email the completed survey attachment to: mandif@student.uv.uio.no

(2) If it is more convenient, you may print out the survey, and just send an email with the question numbers and your corresponding answers.

Note: this should take about 20-30 minute. If you have any problem with downloading the attachment, please don't hesitate to email me and I will send the survey in a different format or by regular mail.

Thank you graciously!!

*Mandie Marie Fiske
(researcher)*

Appendix 28: Example of the Instrument

This version was used to collect data for Group C, however the other instruments varied only slightly in terms of the context of the question.

Norwegian ERASMUS Students Abroad

Survey

Part One: Background-----

_____ 1. What age group do you represent?

- a. 18-21 years b. 22-24 years c. 25-29 years d. 30+ years

_____ 2. What gender are you?

- a. female b. male

_____ 3. How long did you studying abroad?

- a. 6 month b. 1 year c. 2 years d. other

_____ 4. How many years or months of college had you completed at the time you studied abroad?

(if you are a **graduate student** list the number of years ‘+G’ next to it: *example 4+G* (4-years undergraduate+ in graduate program) (If you have done any addition vocational training list years ‘+V’: *example: 3+V* (3 years plus vocational training)

_____ 5. Was this the first time you studied abroad?

- a. yes b. no

_____ 6 Has anyone in your immediate family studied or lived abroad for 6 months or more?

- a. Yes (go on to question 6B) b. No (skip question 6B)

_____ 7. Who in your family has studied or lived abroad for 6 months or more?
(list all that apply)

- a. Mother b. Father c. Brother d. Sister e. none

_____ 8. Has anyone in your immediate family earned a college degree or completed at least 3 years of college?

- a. Yes (go on to question 7B) b. No (skip question 7B)

_____ 9. Who in your family has a college degree or attended at least 3 years college?
(list as many as apply)

- a. Mother b. Father c. Brother d. Sister e. none

_____ 10. How much time per day on average do you spend on the internet?

- a. 4 hours+ b. 2-4 hours c. 1-2 hours d. 25 minutes-1 hour e. few minutes f. none

- _____ 11. About what percent of the Norwegian television that you watch is in English?
- a. 80-100% b. 60-79% c. 40-59% d. 20-39% e. 5-19% f. less than 5%
- (most) (a lot) (about half) (some) (not much) (almost none)
- _____ 12. How many languages do you speak at an advanced level besides Norwegian?
- a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4+
- _____ 13. What type of community or city do you come from?
- a. metropolis b. relatively large city c. town or suburban area d. rural area
- _____ 14. How would you describe the cultural demographic of your hometown, or community?
- a. multicultural b. several prominent groups c. few minorities d. homogeneous
- _____ 15. Which part of the ethnic population of Norway do you reflect? (*Do most people look like you, and have a similar background?*)
- a. majority (yes) b. minority(*no*) c. no clear majority or minorities in my country
- _____ 16. From what you know of the government of the country you visited; how would you rate the Norwegian government compared to that of the country you visited?
- a. more effective b. more fair/ humane c. more bureaucratic d. the same
- e. less effective f. less fair/ humane g. less bureaucratic h. other
- _____ 17. Do you trust institutions run by the Norwegian government?
- a. very much b. much c. not much d. not at all
- _____ 18. When you hear the Norwegian national anthem or other patriotic songs do you feel?
- a. proud b. nostalgic c. mixed feeling d. indifferent e. shame
- _____ 19. Do you display or wear symbols that identify you as a resident of Norway?
- (bunad on the 17th, t-shirts/ stickers with the flag, sports jerseys from national team, etc)
- a. always b. often c. rarely d. never
- _____ 20 Rank the degree of importance of the following aspects of life:
- (#1 being the most important, and #15 being the least important. * please only list each number only one time, even if you consider two things equally important, I cannot use the information if the same answer appears multiply time)
- ___ a. education/ advanced degree ___ f. money/ wealth ___ k. marriage
- ___ b. religious faith ___ g. freedom ___ l. gaining marketable skills
- ___ c. family ___ h. friends ___ m. free time/ quality of life
- ___ d. social status ___ i. appearance ___ n. traveling
- ___ e. political life ___ j. personal health ___ o. honor/ loyalty

Part Two: the ERASMUS Experience-----

_____ 21. Why did you choose to study in the country you did versus another member state?

(may choose 2)

- a. location b. new experience c. know people here d. academics e. local culture
f. learn local language g. improve English language h. scholarship i. weather
j. other: _____

_____ 22. Was taking a language class a priority for you while abroad?

- a. yes b. no c. not sure d. already knew local language

_____ 23. Were most of the friends that you have met while abroad:

- a. locals from the country you studied in b. international students c. Norwegians
d. other Scandinavians e. mix (all of the above) f. didn't make any new friends

_____ 24. Where did you meet the friends that you spent most of your time with abroad?

- a. classes b. ERASMUS activities c. school organizations d. outings in the city
e. house mates/ roommates g. other: _____

_____ 25. Did living and studying with students from the country you visited changed your opinion of people from that country in general?

- a. very much b. somewhat c. not much d. not at all e. doesn't apply

_____ 26. What were the accommodations like where you lived?

- a. dormitory/ meals provided b. student house/ shared facilities c. lived alone
d. rented room in private home e. lived privately with roommates f. other : _

_____ 27. When you approached locals for directions or services did you:

- a. assumed they would treat you in the same manor as any other local.
b. assumed because you are foreign, would react kinder than usual.
c. assumed they would be kind, but you still felt uneasy about the interaction
d. assumed they would be unfriendly, but this did not bother you.
e. assumed they disliked you, making you wish you were not foreign.
f. other: _ (type experience here if not listed above)

_____ 28. What was the **hardest part** of studying in the country you lived in?
(list up to 3, start with most difficult)

- a. language of class instruction b. the academic standards c. the teaching style
d. the accommodations e. the cost of living f. paperwork/ bureaucracy g. weather
h. transportation j. transferring the credits h. local culture i. administrative support
j. other: (*type here*)

_____ 29. What was the **best part** of studying in the country you lived in?
(list up to 3, start with what you liked the best)

- a. language of class instruction b. the academic standards c. the teaching style
d. the accommodations e. the cost of living f. light paperwork/ bureaucracy
g. good weather h. effective transportation j. easily transferred the credits
h. local culture i. administrative support j. other: (*type here*)

_____ 30. As a result of studying abroad were you: (list up to 3)

- a. compelled you to study abroad again in another country
b. compelled you to return to that country in the future to study or visit
c. caused you to reevaluate or alter your course of study in Norway
d. caused you to re-evaluate your future career plans
e. left you with a positive feeling about the country, but you don't see yourself returning
f. left you with negative impression of the country, and you plan to tell others not to go
g. had little impact, and has compelled you to resume life as it was
h. other (*type here*)

----*Short Answer: Type answers directly below the question, use as much space as you need to answer the question.*----

31. **While abroad, did you have any culture clashes with people from a different background than you, is so, please tell me more?** (This could be something that caused a conflict or a new or interesting difference in culture that you encountered that seemed strange to you at the time, or perhaps you simply noticed a difference in culture, although it didn't affect you negatively.)

32. **Has being abroad strengthened or weakened your connection to Norway?** (In other words do you feel a greater appreciation for Norway as a result of being abroad, or do you see yourself more as a citizen of the world, i.e. 'cosmopolitan' that could live happily anywhere.

33. **When you returned to Norway, what in you life changes?** (Example: maybe your daily routine changed, could be little changes like what time you ate dinner or it could be major shifts in music preferences, interests, career choices, etc.)

34. **Have your feelings towards immigrants living in Norway changed as a result of 'walking in their shoes' in other words, being foreign yourself while abroad?**

35. **If you had the power to change one thing about the ERASMUS program, what would it be, and how would it have improved your experience?**

36. **OPEN NOTEBOOK:** Was there something that the researcher has missed that profoundly affected your experience abroad or something that you were hoping this survey would address but did not, please share your thoughts here:

-END-

Thank you for your participation!!!

